

THE KING'S HIGHWAY

BAUMER

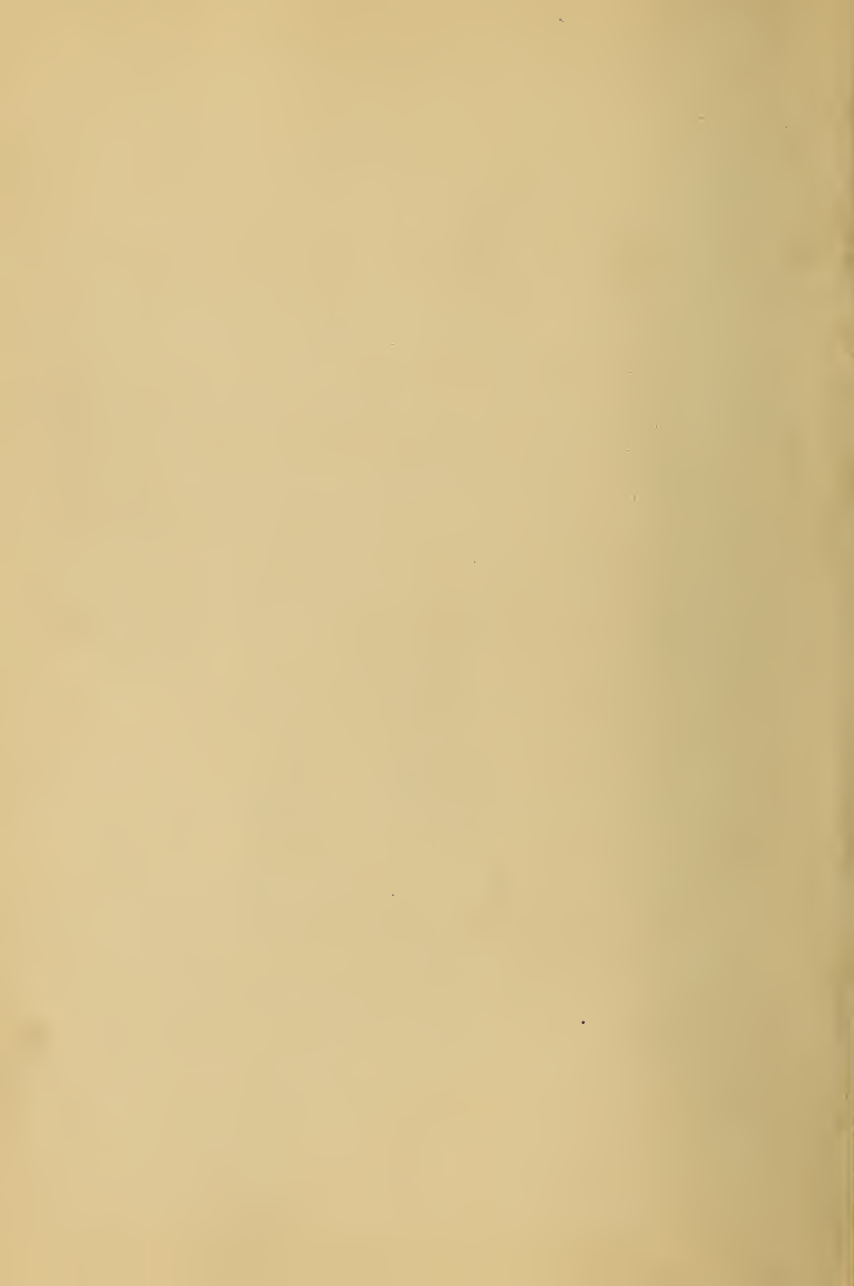


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THE
KING'S HIGHWAY

OR

The Story of the Truthseekers' Club

BY

M. D. BAUMER

"Ask, and ye shall receive; seek, and ye shall find; knock, and it shall be opened unto you."—MATT. 7:7

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PREFACE.

This little volume contains a story that is not altogether fiction. The characters are taken from life, and most of the arguments have been heard again and again. The scenes depicted are those which have occurred in the author's presence during a ministry of a dozen years. This little story simply portrays in modern days what was prophesied by Isaiah: "And a highway shall be there, and a way, and it shall be called The way of holiness; the unclean shall not pass over it, but it shall be for the redeemed: the wayfaring man, yea fools, shall not err therein."

If the reading of *THE KING'S HIGHWAY* shall lead some soul to a greater knowledge of the word of God, the writer will feel that his labors have not been in vain.

M. D. B.

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THE KING'S HIGHWAY.

CHAPTER I.

THE CAUSE OF IT ALL.

A stranger visiting Westville on the 17th day of March, 19—, would have beheld church members on every street earnestly engaged in conversation. Strange as it may seem, all this was caused by a notice placed in the *Westville Gazette* by a Seventh-day Advent preacher, who had just closed a series of meetings. The notice was commonplace, and read as follows:

"One Hundred Dollars Reward

"To any one who can prove from the Bible or History that Sunday is the Sabbath of the fourth commandment.

"Elder JOSHUA WHITMAN,
"Whiteville, Michigan."

Various and curious were the arguments presented by friends of both parties. Mrs. Suete was heard to say to her friends that her pastor had preached on this subject a few Sabbaths previous, and she knew that her church was right, because her pastor would never in all this world tell a lie about such a thing. And besides, she couldn't understand why such a pesky fellow as that Whiten, or what-

ever his name was, should be allowed to come into any respectable community to stir up such a fuss.

Mr. Lawsler told his comrades that he had attended all the meetings, and that the Elder made everything as plain as day. Mr. Lawsler was one of Elder Whitman's converts, and it was said that he worked diligently every Sunday since his conversion. His enemies admitted, however, that he worked one day more each week than he did before the meetings began.

John Suete said — everybody called him John, his name being a household word in Westville: "If the orthodox churches are right, why do they not furnish the required evidence and get that one hundred dollars? It would be a help to them, and it would also stop this excitement."

John had been denounced as an infidel by the clergy of Westville, several of whom had offered him a home in their churches, and to whom he had given the answer: "I can't find your name or your practices in the Bible, and am not hypocrite enough to sanction anything I believe to be wrong. When I find a church teaching and practicing as the primitive churches did, I will at once become a member."

The day after the excitement he expressed his opinion very freely to a friend, who replied that if the preachers and members would not investigate it, why should not a club in Bible study be organized, and this advertisement be used as the first subject?

"Just the thing," was the reply. "Let us meet here to-morrow afternoon for organization. You tell as many as you can, and I'll do the same."

The next afternoon saw such a gathering in his office that the uninitiated wondered what had happened. The company consisted of fifteen persons from eleven families and ten religious beliefs, who soon arranged for a permanent organization.

While they were discussing their plans, Rev. Quenton, the Episcopal minister, entered, and asked permission to present a note from the ministerium of the city. This being granted, he said: "I wish to tell you that this club will not meet the approbation of the churches. For this reason the ministers protest against this assembly, and in their meeting this morning appointed me as a committee to visit you. We, who have spent years in the study of theology, and have been honored with degrees by our respective seminaries and colleges, look upon it as an insult to our learning and position. Let us kindly admonish you to adjourn your meeting and pay no attention to that advertisement. It was placed in the paper by a religious mountebank, who has no standing whatever among orthodox ministers, to create a moment's disturbance and increase his notoriety. My brethren, as you well know, have preached eloquently on this and similar subjects, to the edifying of their congregations, and it is not fitting that a few disgruntled members should undertake to overrule them by pretending to learnedly examine any religious theories that may be presented to their notice by any charlatan who passes through our little city. Your pastors are abundantly able to take care of all such questions themselves."

This speech, so uncalled for, and delivered in such a domineering manner, aroused the ire of the lawyer, and,

springing to his feet, he replied: "Sir! Allow me to say to you that we resent your action as an intrusion on our rights. We are free-born American citizens, and are interfering with no one. If the clergy of this city are abundantly able to handle this question, why have they not done so? You may say that you do not believe in controversy; you may hurl your innuendoes at the stranger who comes to Westville; but the fact remains that the clergy have shown themselves either ignorant of the question, or presuming upon their authority or their superior piety, have thought themselves above looking into these things.

"You may report to your fellow ministers that we have met to study our Bibles, and that we will resent any interference from them. If any of the friends here do not agree with me, let them speak."

After the minister had departed, Mr. Thomas suggested that, as they were seeking the truth, they call themselves *The Truthseekers' Club*. This suggestion, coupled with one that they should meet on every Thursday evening at the homes of the members, was immediately adopted. After discussing rules and other minor points of organization, the company separated, to meet at the home of John Suete.

CHAPTER II.

THE CLUB'S FIRST MEETING.

When Rev. Quenton returned to his fellow ministers with the club's report, it was immediately decided that such heresy must be stamped out. Following this, a proposition was adopted stating that each minister should visit those of his members who had declared their intention to join the club, and notify them that they would incur the displeasure of their churches if they attended. This had the effect of keeping several of the timid ones away on the following Thursday. However, quite a few gathered, and, after conversing a little while, began opening their Bibles and casting furtive glances at John, as if they expected him to take the initiative in the meeting. Finally Deacon Rames suggested that they begin.

Before any of the members could reply, Elder Visson, a Seventh-day Advent preacher, who had come on Mr. Lawsler's request, began to address the gathering.

"I understand you are to begin the study of the Sabbath question, and am glad to be with you, so that I can give you much needed help. You are all keeping the wrong day, and it seems strange to me that you can not see your mistake.

"When Constantine acknowledged Christ, he refused to surrender the venerable day of the sun, but brought it with him into Christianity, and thus handed it down to

the churches of to-day. About 321 A.D. he made the following law for his whole nation: 'Let all the judges and townspeople and the occupants of all trades rest on the venerable day of the sun, but let those who are situated in the country freely and at full liberty attend to the business of agriculture, because it often happens that no other day is fit for sowing corn and planting vines, lest the critical moment, being let slip, men should lose the commodities granted by heaven.'

"This was the first time Christians were told to observe the first day of the week. And it was first enjoined on the churches as the Lord's day in 364 A.D. William Prynne, in 'Dissertation on the Lord's-Day Sabbath,' says: 'The seventh-day Sabbath . . . solemnized by Christ, the apostles, and the early Christians, till the Laodicean Council, did in a manner quite abolish the observation of it.'"

"The gentleman is slightly mixed in his evidence," said Professor Harwood when the Elder had concluded. "If Constantine was the first to enjoin it on the Christians in 321 A.D., the Council certainly was not the first to enjoin it in 364 A.D."

At this point Mr. Upton interrupted him by suggesting that they examine the Scriptures.

Elder Visson immediately opened his Bible and began reading Exodus 20:8: "Remember the Sabbath day to keep it holy." Then he asked them to turn to Deuteronomy 5:22, and read that: "These words the Lord spake unto all your assembly in the mount out of the midst of the fire, of the cloud, and of the thick darkness, with a great voice; and he added no more." This state-

ment, "And he added no more," he explained, showed that the ten commandments are a complete law, and that nothing more was added to them.

"I believe we must keep the holy Sabbath," said Mrs. Sherndon, excitedly. "I"—

"But you don't keep the Sabbath day," replied the minister. "You are keeping another day — not a holy day, but a heathen festival."

"Before we go any farther let us see how many of us know the proper divisions of the Bible," said Professor Harwood.

As several looked at him quite askance, he continued: "You know that certain rules govern the study of every subject. We should apply these rules to the Bible to learn that each part has its proper use and place. As Paul says: 'He taketh away the first that he may establish the second' (Heb. 10: 5-9)."

"But that means the ceremonial law," was the reply, amidst fervent Amens.

"Dr. Sherndon, will you turn to the passage of Scripture that mentions the ceremonial law?" returned the Professor.

The physician turned the pages a moment, then he said: "I don't remember just where it is, but I have heard it mentioned quite frequently."

"Probably Mr. Lawsler can find it."

"It's in — ah — in — really, I don't recall it now, but our preachers often quote it. Brother Visson, do you remember the chapter?"

"No, I don't recall it just now!"

"Well!" responded the Professor; "while you try to

find it I will explain my remarks. A friend has put the rules I mentioned in rhyme, and I will recite them to you :

“ If knowledge you would obtain,
Five things observe with care :
By whom 'twas written,
To whom 'twas written,
And why, and when, and where.’

“ By careful study you will discover that the Old Testament is divided into three parts, as described by the Lord in Luke 24: 44: ‘All things must needs be fulfilled which are written in the law of Moses, and the prophets, and the Psalms, concerning me.’ Please notice that law is singular, Psalms and prophets plural.

“ The divisions of the New Testament are as plainly marked as those of the Old. They are: The Memoirs; Acts of the Apostles; the Epistles, and Revelations.

“ The Memoirs were written to produce and to increase faith. As proof of this I refer you to Luke 1: 1-4; John 20: 31, and Romans 10: 17.

“ The Book of Acts is the book of conversions. Therefore, when the believer wants to know what to do, he studies this book. In it he will find the first gospel sermon and its results; the beginning of the church on Pentecost, and the process of conversion.

“ The Epistles were written to Christians. In proof of this please read Rom. 1: 7; 1 Cor. 1: 1, 2; Gal. 1: 2; 1 Tim. 1: 2, etc. These letters are the ‘Discipline,’ or Rule of Faith, of the churches, that the man of God may be complete, furnished completely unto every good work. 2 Tim. 3: 16, 17.

"The last division is called a revelation of Jesus Christ, which God gave him to show unto his servants. It is prophetic history of God's church and its enemies, and is to be read by his people. See Rev 1:3.

"The seven-bowled lampstand, which was the only light within the tabernacle, foreshadowed this book — the only light of the New Testament temple, which temple ye are. The three divisions, Law, Prophets and Psalms, pointed forward to the Christ; while the Acts, Epistles and Revelations point back to Him. Between them, as it were on the shaft, is the center division, the life of Jesus the Messiah."

"If we accept this method, what will become of the Psalms? so many enjoy reading them," asked Mrs. Suete.

"They will be understood better and appreciated more than at present. Paul enjoins the reading of them upon the church (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16). Read them in the light of this method, knowing that the Christ has come, and the nations of the world may worship in His name, and you will find new beauty in every one of them."

"I think it is only fair that we give this question a thorough examination," spoke an interested listener. "The only way to learn the truth is to notice carefully every view that is presented. We can not overthrow all the false theories in a day. It may be that some of us can bring additional light to bear on this subject."

After a few more suggestions and a general discussion of the subject presented, the members and visitors began leaving by twos and threes, each one determined to be present the next Thursday, and, if possible, bring some one with them.

CHAPTER III.

THE TWO COVENANTS.

The week following the meeting was a busy one for most of the members. They had diligently studied the subject discussed, and were anxious to meet again. Therefore, when the evening arrived all were ready to begin.

When all had gathered into the spacious parlors of Dr. Sherndon's residence, they found that Professor Harwood and Elder Visson were absent. The former soon entered, and, apologizing for his tardiness, asked if any had found the ceremonial law.

"I couldn't find it," replied Mr. Upton. "It is strange—I am positive it is there, but it continually eludes me. I don't understand why I can't find it."

"The reason you haven't found it is because it is not in the Book. It is a theological term, and contradictory to the teaching of the Bible. The phrase, 'the law,' is there, but the terms 'ceremonial' and 'moral' are not coupled with it."

"It may not be there in so many words," said Elder Visson, who had entered in time to hear the foregoing remarks, "but the whole tenor of the Bible is to that effect. Just notice these differences between the two:

"1. *Moral*.—Spoken by God.—Deut. 4: 12.

Ceremonial.—Spoken by Moses.—Deut. 1: 1-6.

“ 2. *Moral*.—Perfect.—Psa. 19: 7.

Ceremonial.—Made nothing perfect.—Heb. 7: 19.

“ 3. *Moral*.—Every jot and tittle shall stand till heaven and earth pass away.—Matt. 5: 18.

Ceremonial.—Was added till the seed came.—Gal. 3: 19.”

“ The Elder should read Deuteronomy 1: 1-6 and learn that it was the law spoken by God that Moses spoke,” said Deacon Rames. “ And I think he ought also to read Matthew 5: 18, for he misquoted that. As for his other idea, the quotation from Galatians shows that, perfect or imperfect, something was wrong, and God repealed it.”

“ I would like to have the Professor tell us what he thinks the two covenants are? It appears to me that they somehow are connected with the law and the gospel,” requested the lawyer.

This proposition being seconded by a majority, the Professor told them that long after the first covenant had been given, the prophet Jeremiah said: “ Behold the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a new covenant with the house of Israel and with the house of Judah; not according to the covenant that I made with their fathers in the day that I took them by the hand to bring them out of the land of Egypt, which my covenant they brake, although I was a husband unto them, saith the Lord ” (Jer. 31: 31, 32). And in Galatians 3: 24, 25, Paul says: “ The law hath been our tutor to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.” But now that faith is come, we are no longer under a tutor.”

Another argument he presented was that the Jews,

though all members of the old covenant, persecuted the members of the new, both Jew and Gentile, with terrible fierceness. Had the two been identical, this would not have occurred; therefore the old covenant was to the Jews; but the new to the world.

Then turning suddenly to Elder Visson, he inquired: "What do you call the moral law?"

"The Decalogue, or ten commandments."

"All the rest is ceremonial law?"

"Yes!"

"And all done away with?"

"Yes! All the ceremonial law is."

"How many of these commandments are moral?"

"What is a good definition of the word 'moral'?" interrupted Mr. Upton.

"Webster defines it: 'Relating to the practice, manners or conduct of men, as social beings, in relation to each other, and with reference to right and wrong.'"

"Then the Elder must say that six of them are moral and four are religious; and we can not honestly call the decalogue the moral law."

Several questions were now asked and answered. Then some one asked, If the new covenant was promised to Israel, how could it be the gospel which is to go to every creature, and if there was not a law of Moses and a law of God?

The following replies were given:

(1) It was not promised to Israel only. All nations would say, Come, let us go up to the house of the God of Jacob, and we will walk in his paths. Again, "But I speak to you that are Gentiles, inasmuch as I am an

apostle of Gentiles. But if some of the branches were broken off, and thou, being a wild olive, wast grafted in among them and didst become partakers with them of the root and fatness of the olive tree, glory not over the branches; but if thou gloriest, it is not thou that bearest the root, but the root thee. Thou wilt say then branches were broken off that I might be grafted in. Well, by their unbelief they were broken off, and thou standest by faith."

(2) Read Nehemiah 8:1-9, and you will learn that all the people gathered there and heard the law of God, which was the law of Moses.

"I happen to notice a passage of Scripture which, I think, bears upon this subject," exclaimed Deacon Rames. "I refer to Hebrews 8:13. 'In that he saith, A new covenant, he hath made the first old. But that which is becoming old and waxeth aged is nigh unto vanishing away.'"

Some one now asked what the first covenant was, and received the reply that it must be the one given on Sinai, and therefore, according to Paul's argument, would pass away some time after Jeremiah's day.

A member then offered the suggestion that Paul said: "For this cause he [Christ] is the mediator of a new covenant; that a death having taken place for the redemption of the transgressions that were under the first covenant, they that have been called may receive the promise of the eternal inheritance. For where a testament is, there must of necessity be the death of him that made it. For a testament is of force where there hath been a death. For doth it ever avail while he that made it liveth?"

Deacon Rames then continued: "Speaking of his coming death on the night in which he instituted the Lord's Supper, Jesus took the cup, and, giving thanks, handed it to his disciples, saying: 'Drink ye all of it, for this is my blood of the new covenant, which is shed for many unto the remission of sins' (Matt. 26: 27, 28)."

When the argument was concluded, some one suggested that, as it was growing late, they should continue their investigation of the subject at the next meeting. It was also suggested that they re-examine the evening's discussion during the week.

Professor Harwood now requested permission to ask a question. It being granted, he said: "If the new covenant is the decalogue, it was established before the death of the testator. How could it be the covenant spoken of in Hebrews 9: 15-17?"

At the conclusion of these remarks the meeting adjourned, to meet in one week.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SABBATH DAY.

The next meeting was larger and more enthusiastic than any of the previous ones; every one seemed anxious to find out how his neighbors had fared. The week had been a very exciting one. The week had seemed like the one following Elder Whitman's challenge. Rumors of all kinds were afloat. Threats of church displeasure and angry replies and denunciations were plentiful. One said that he had heard that John Suete had organized an infidel church, which met in his house every Thursday. Another replied that this was their Sabbath day, and that John was the clergyman, and preached to his members at their meetings. One good old lady was told that the new church was fixing up a new Bible that would overthrow Christendom. The ministers were very outspoken against the new heresy, and several of them had strongly advised ostracism to bring the erring ones to their senses. But all these things only added fuel to the fire, and aroused the curiosity of some who otherwise would not have attended.

When the club met, there were so many visitors that the double doors between the rooms had to be opened. As soon as the company were all seated, the Professor began the investigation of the evening's topic by saying that he had noticed that the hardest counterfeit to discover is the one that most nearly resembles the original.

Therefore, while this question was being discussed all should be led away. He said he had tried to show them that the law was fulfilled and is not in force to-day, though it is not destroyed. To illustrate: When one pays a mortgage, it is not destroyed by the act, yet it is no longer in force; it has been canceled. So it is with the old covenant; it has been fulfilled — accomplished; that is, its demands have been complied with. And, as has been suggested, if the covenant is the decalogue, then the Sabbath is done away with also. He also asked them whether or not his quotations showed the decalogue to be a part of the law. Then he presented the following: If the new covenant is the decalogue, it must have been established before Jesus became the mediator. (Heb. 8: 6.)

“Professor, why don't you believe in keeping the Sabbath?” asked some one.

“I am compelled to say, after searching the Scriptures, that there is no command for Christians to keep the Sabbath. One reason I give to uphold this doctrine is, that the Sabbath was not given for more than twenty centuries after creation. The first mention of it as a day to be observed is found in Exodus 16: 23. God had told Moses that he would provide for the children of Israel. He said: ‘Behold, I will rain bread from heaven for you, and the people shall go out and gather a day's portion every day, that I may prove them whether they will walk in my law or no. And it shall come to pass on the sixth day that they shall prepare that which they bring in, and it shall be twice as much as they gather daily’ (Exodus 16: 4, 5). ‘And it came to pass that on the sixth day they

gathered as much bread, two omers for each one, and all the rulers of the congregation came and told Moses. And he said unto them, This is that which the Lord hath spoken, To-morrow is a solemn rest, a holy sabbath unto the Lord: bake that which ye shall bake, and seethe that which ye shall seethe, and all that remaineth over lay up for you to be kept until the morning' (Exodus 16: 22, 23). If they had been accustomed to keeping the Sabbath, why were they surprised when the people obeyed the command?

"Prior to 1647 A.D. [Hale's Chronology] the Scriptural history of Sabbath-keeping among men is an entire blank. If any sacred day was observed, we have no record to tell us which of the days of the week it was. And it is certain that no such Sabbath as that which is found in the decalogue was kept by any people, for all the elements which enter into Sabbath-keeping had not then transpired. Justin Martyr says that the patriarchs were justified before God in not keeping the Sabbaths. And again, from Abraham originated circumcision, and from Moses the Sabbath.

"Another reason why we do not observe it is, that it was given to the Jews only. I turn to Exodus 16 and 20, and learn that Israel stood before Sinai. When I read of the crossing of the Red Sea, I know it was the Jewish nation that passed over. And when I read of the giving of the law, I read about the Hebrew people receiving it.

"In the prayer found in Nehemiah 9: 14, the Levites speak of their fathers, and say: 'Thou madest known to them thy holy Sabbaths.' And in Nehemiah 4: 8: 'What great nation is there that hath statutes and judgments so righteous as all their law which I set before you this day?'

"The ten commandments were not given to the Jewish patriarchs — Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. For Deuteronomy 5: 1-3 states that Moses called unto all Israel and said unto them: 'Hear, O Israel, the statutes and the judgments which I speak in your ears this day, that you may learn and observe to do them. The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us who are all of us here alive this day.' This included the Sabbath, and was limited to that nation. It was given at its birth, and passed away with its death. 'It is a sign between me and Israel, saith the Lord.' Exodus 31: 13-17."

"I have some proofs showing that we must keep the Sabbath day holy," interrupted Elder Visson. "(1) Jesus kept the day. (2) Sunday was given by the Roman Church through the Emperor Constantine and the Council of Laodicea. Constantine gave the following as his reason: 'Let us have nothing in common with the most hostile rabble of the Jews.' (3) The Sabbath was made for man. (4) Paul preached on the Sabbath. (5) God gave the law of the Sabbath at creation. (6) Read Acts 13: 42; 16: 13. (7) Christ commanded his disciples to keep it. (Matt. 24: 20.) These proofs are conclusive, and I am anxious to see what the Professor will do with them."

"Before I notice these proofs, I want to present to your notice another passage of Scripture in order to strengthen my position," was the response. "Exodus 34: 1, 27, reads: 'And the Lord said unto Moses, Hew thee two tables of stone like unto the first: and I will write upon the tables the words that were on the first

tables which thou breakest. And the Lord said unto Moses, Write thou these words: for after the tenor of these words I have made a covenant *with thee and with Israel.*'

"The Elder says Jesus kept the Sabbath. True! He also was circumcised and kept the passover. Why? Because the old covenant was not abrogated until it was nailed to the cross. Until that time all Hebrews and proselytes were compelled to observe it. The Scriptures teach us that when the fullness of time came, God sent forth his Son, born of a woman, under the law, that he might redeem them which were under the law.—Gal. 4:4, 5. He is the testator of the new covenant, which could not be in force until the death of the testator.

"In regard to Sunday, I deny the gentleman's statement. If the disciples had been in the habit of meeting on the Sabbath, Luke would have recorded it in the Acts of the Apostles. But we find another day referred to there. Paul spent seven days in Troas (Acts 20:6, 7); there is no record of a Sabbath meeting, but upon the first day of the week, when the disciples gathered to break bread, Paul preached to them. The Elder says it was changed by an emperor and a council. If one did it, the other did not. Again, the Council of Laodicea was a Greek Catholic, not a Roman Catholic Council. Again, the Roman Catholic Church does not say that a Pope changed the day, but that the apostles did it.

"*Question:* Are the Sabbath day and the Sunday the same?

"*Answer:* The Sabbath day and the Sunday are not

the same. The Sabbath is the seventh day of the week, and is the day which was kept holy in the old law; the Sunday is the first day of the week, and is the day kept holy in the new law.

“*Question:* Why does the Church command us to keep the Sunday holy instead of the Sabbath?

“*Answer:* The Church commands us to keep the Sunday holy instead of the Sabbath because on Sunday Christ rose from the dead, and on Sunday he sent the Holy Ghost upon the apostles.’—*A Catechism of Christian Doctrine*, p. 77.

“*Question:* What are the days which the Church commands us to be kept holy?

“*Answer:* The Sunday, or our Lord’s day, which we observe by apostolic tradition, instead of the Sabbath.’—*The Catholic Christian Instructed*.

“Another idea of the Elder’s is that the Sabbath, being made for man, it must be made for all men. Is this so? The law, including the Sabbath, was given four hundred and thirty years after the promise given to Abraham. See Gal. 3: 16, 17; Exod. 12: 40, 41. Moses said this law or covenant was given to those who were at Sinai. (Deut. 5: 1-3.) It was given to Jews only, and was given to bless them, not to inflict upon them needless suffering. Jesus was not giving a history of the Sabbath, but was defending his disciples against the charge of Sabbath-breaking. Hence he said the Sabbath was made for man, and not man for the Sabbath. Paul says: ‘Let no man, therefore, judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of

a feast day, or a new moon, or a Sabbath day; which are a shadow of the things to come' (Col. 2:16).

"Why should we notice the statement that Paul preached on the Sabbath when we know that he preached every day, and if he wanted to preach to the Jews, he must meet with them on their sacred day?

"And now, as regards his next argument, which seemed to meet the approbation of most of you. Moses says (Deut. 5:2, 3): 'The Lord our God made a covenant with us in Horeb. The Lord made not this covenant with our fathers, but with us, even us, who are all here alive this day.' Shall we believe Elder Visson or Moses; which?

"Again, we have been asked to read Acts 13:42, and Acts 16:13. There is nothing in these passages bearing upon the Sabbath day except that Paul preached to certain Jews and proselytes, who wanted to hear him again on their next meeting day, and that on a certain Sabbath he went to a Jewish prayer meeting and preached Christ.

"We find nothing in the Scriptures that teach that the Sabbath was to be observed by the Gentiles. On the contrary, we find that when certain Pharisees which believed said the Gentile Christians should be circumcised and keep the law of Moses, the apostles and elders at Jerusalem met, and Paul said: 'Why tempt ye God to put a yoke upon the Gentiles, which neither we nor our fathers could bear?' James said: 'My sentence is that we trouble not them which from among the Gentiles are turned to God.' See Acts 15:4-31.

"The greatest mistake of our Sabbatarian friends is that they put the Sabbath where the Bible puts faith in

Jesus the Christ. Their leader, Mrs. White, says: 'The Sabbath is the great question which is to decide the destiny of souls.'—*Great Controversy Between Christ and Satan*, p. 337.

"There are two great memorials in the Bible, one for the Old Testament people and the other for the New Testament people. The first is the Sabbath day; the second, the Lord's Supper. Both celebrate the leading of a nation out of bondage into freedom. God gave the fourth commandment to the Israelites and said: 'Thou shalt remember that thou wast a servant in the land of Egypt, and the Lord thy God brought thee out thence by a mighty hand and by a stretched-out arm: therefore the Lord thy God commanded thee to keep the Sabbath day' (Deut. 5: 14). Jesus Christ instituted the Lord's Supper, telling his disciples to do this in remembrance of him. Each had a purpose in view, and each accomplished its purpose.

"In conclusion let me point you to a lesson from the Scriptures: One of them, a lawyer, asked him a question tempting him, 'Master, which is the great commandment in the law?' And Jesus replied: 'Thou shalt love thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy mind. And the second great one is: 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself.' Not a word about Sabbath-keeping."

As it was growing late, it was decided to suspend further discussion until the next meeting, and the company departed to their homes.

CHAPTER V.

TWO HOLY DAYS.

The next Thursday evening was dark and stormy. A chilly west wind was driving occasional showers of rain and sleet against windows and buildings, and but few ventured to attend the meeting. Hence, instead of discussing the regular subject, the evening was profitably spent in reviewing the past work of the club. A part of the time was used to discuss the actions of the ministers and committees and the probable future results of their bigotry.

The following Thursday was a beautiful day, and a large number of friends met with the club. Mr. Lawsler was a little later than the others, but arrived before the meeting was called to order. He excused himself on his arrival by saying that Elder Visson had been called away on business, and had left some proofs, and that he had forgotten them and was compelled to return for them.

When opportunity was given, after the meeting opened, he said: "These proofs will establish the fact that the Sabbath is still in force. (1) The religious world has pretended to keep the Sabbath for sixteen hundred years. (2) The Sabbath was made for man. Now, the word *man* means all men; there is no limit to it. (3) There was a mixed multitude at Sinai. A *mixed multitude* means Jews and Gentiles, and both were at that mountain. (4)

The Sabbath was an everlasting covenant. (5) Christ commanded his disciples to keep it.—Matt. 24: 20.”

John Sute replied to these proofs by saying: “I have been studying this question very carefully, and will notice these new arguments in their order. I confess I am surprised to hear some of them in this enlightened age. (1) Let me ask, Why did the religious world pretend to keep the Sabbath? Because they misunderstood the purpose of the day. But what has that to do with God’s commands? It surely does not prove anything about the Lord’s commands concerning any day.

“(2) The Sabbath was made for man. It has been plainly shown that it was not for all men, so I need not waste any time with that. But Mr. Lawsler has a false idea about this passage of Scripture. It teaches that the Pharisees, and I may add the Advents, are wrong; they acted as if man had been made for the Sabbath; as if the day was an unyielding mold into which man must be forced. Jesus taught that the day was for the benefit of God’s ancient people; and when it disappeared and the Lord’s day took its place, this was seen by all who read in the light of the greater knowledge.

“(3) What says the Scriptures? ‘And the children of Israel journeyed from Rameses to Succoth, about six hundred thousand on foot that were men, besides women and children. And a mixed multitude went up also with them; and flocks and herds, even very much cattle’ (Ex. 12: 37, 38). If the simple fact that others were with the Jews gave them the commandments, that same fact would give them to very much cattle. God said to Abraham that if a man were born in his house or bought

with his money, he should be circumcised as a proof of his membership in the covenant. If this mixed multitude was circumcised, it became a part of God's people; if not, then it was not so. Exodus 19: 3 says: 'Thus shalt thou say to the house of Jacob and tell the children of Israel.' No other people are mentioned. In Deuteronomy 23: 7, 8, I read: 'Thou shalt not abhor an Edomite, for he is thy brother: thou shalt not abhor an Egyptian, because thou wast a stranger in his land. The children that are begotten of them shall enter into the congregation of the Lord in their third generation.' "

"May I present a fact to show that Adam could not have kept the Sabbath according to the Sinai law?" asked Deacon Rames. "The command is, 'Labor six days and rest on the seventh.' Adam was created on the sixth day (Gen. 1: 27; 2: 21, 22). His first day was God's sixth, and his seventh would have been God's fifth."

"The Jews kept the day in a different manner than it is kept to-day," said a member. "Moses taught them as follows: (1) 'Abide ye every man in his place on the seventh day; let no man go out of his place on the seventh day' (Ex. 16: 29). (2) 'Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitation upon the Sabbath day' (Ex. 35: 3). (3) 'In it thou shalt not do any work, thou, nor thy son, nor thy daughter, nor thy manservant, nor thy maidservant, nor thy cattle, nor the stranger that is within thy gates' (Ex. 20: 10). Who has not seen Sabbatarians driving to meeting on Saturday? (4) 'Violators must be punished by death' (Ex. 31: 14, 15; Num. 15: 32-36)."

Mr. Upton now arose and said: "Friends, I have been studying about the first day of the week, and I find the

following passages in the New Testament: Matt. 28:1; Mark 16:2; Luke 24:1; John 20:1; Luke 24:13-33; Luke 24:36-43; John 20:36; Acts 2:20:7; 1 Cor. 16:1, 2, and Rev. 1:10. I also find from Lev. 23:15-21 that Pentecost came on the first day of the week.

"I believe Mr. Lawsler referred to Matt. 24:30 as a proof. If you will read this, you will learn that because Jerusalem would fall, they should not come off the house-tops; nor return from the fields; nor go on the Sabbath day; nor in the winter. Why? On the Sabbath the gates would be shut, and traveling on that day would arouse suspicion and delay them; and in winter they would have to undergo too much suffering."

Dr. Sherndon supplemented the foregoing with the following quotations:

Smith's Bible Dictionary.—"The Lord's day existed during these two centuries as a part of apostolic and so of Scriptural Christianity. . . . It was never confounded with the Sabbath, but carefully distinguished from it."

Schaff-Hertzog Encyclopedia, Art. *Sunday*.—"In the second century its observance was universal. The Jewish Christians ceased to observe the Sabbath after the destruction of Jerusalem."

Clark's Commentary.—"The first day of the week was observed as a Christian Sabbath because on it Jesus Christ rose from the dead; therefore it was called the Lord's day, and has taken the place of the Jewish Sabbath throughout the world."

Jamieson, Fausett and Brown.—"This [Rev. 1:10] is the earliest mention of the term, 'The Lord's day.' But the consecration of the day to worship, alms giving,

and the Lord's Supper is implied in Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 11:20; 16:2."

Id. 1 Cor. 16:2.—"First day of the week — already kept sacred by Christians as the day of the Lord's resurrection, the beginning both of physical and of the new spiritual creation."

Ignatius [First Century].—"If, therefore, those who were brought up in the ancient order of things have come to the possession of a new hope, no longer observing the Sabbath day, but living in the celebration of the Lord's day, on which also our life has sprung up again."

Justin Martyr [Second Century].—"But Sunday is the day on which we all hold our common assemblies, because Jesus Christ, our Savior, on the same day rose from the dead."

Peter, Bishop of Alexandria [Third Century].—"The Lord's day we celebrate as a day of joy because on it he rose again."

When the Doctor had finished his quotations, the Deacon called attention to the fact that they had not answered Mr. Lawsler's statement about the Sabbath being an everlasting covenant, and explained that when one broke a contract, that released both parties. He then showed them that the Jews had broken this covenant again and again, and quoted the following:

"They have transgressed the laws, changed the ordinances, and broken the everlasting covenant" (Isa. 24:5).

"I will also cause her mirth to cease, her feasts, her new moons and her Sabbaths, and her solemn assemblies" (Hosea 2:11).

In the informal discussion that followed it was agreed

to take note of anything special in the sermons of the following Sunday, and use them as subjects for investigation, because a common conclusion seemed to have been reached on the former ones. The meeting then adjourned, with many expressions of pleasure and good will.

CHAPTER VI.

A SERMON ON BAPTISM.

The audience that gathered in the Fourth Street Church Sunday morning heard a sermon from Matthew 28: 19, 20. The minister argued that sprinkling was baptism; that infants should be baptized and afterwards taught; and that immersion was not always convenient and had proved dangerous. After the sermon he announced that any one desiring baptism should present themselves at the altar. Several went forward in answer to this invitation, some to accept sprinkling and one to demand immersion.

One of those who went forward was a young woman with a two months' old baby in her arms, which she wanted christened. The preacher passed from one to another, placing his hand in the bowl and then on the heads of the candidates, pronouncing in each case the baptismal formula. When he came to the mother and child, she submitted to the act, but the child began to kick and cry. Despite this opposition, however, the ceremony was completed. John, who had been a close observer, turned to his wife and whispered: "That's what I call water salvation; there is no faith nor repentance in it; nothing but water. Didn't you hear your preacher read, 'None shall enter the kingdom of God, except he be regenerated and born anew of water and the Holy Ghost'? And in

his prayer he said, 'We call upon Thee for these persons, that they, coming to thy holy baptism, may receive remission of their sins by spiritual regeneration'—and, say! I thought your Church gave candidates their choice of modes."

"It does," she replied. "Didn't you hear the minister say so?"

"Yes! But that child seemed to be opposed to sprinkling, yet it was compelled to accept it."

"The child isn't old enough to understand."

"Then what good did the sprinkling do?"

Mrs. Suete's reply was drowned in the singing of the doxology and the matter was dropped. But on Thursday evening, as soon as the club had assembled, John presented the matter, and asked some one to explain it.

Deacon Rames told him that there was no Scripture for the practice, but that it was borrowed from the Roman Catholic Church. Of course this view was objected to by many of the members. Mrs. Suete voiced their sentiment by exclaiming: "Our pastor spoke of the baptism of entire households, and of nations. Surely there were infants there."

"There are also idiots and drunkards, but we don't baptize them," was the rejoinder.

"But Jesus said, 'Suffer the little ones to come unto me.' Did he not baptize them, then?"

"There is nothing said about baptism in the passage; it states that he laid his hands on them. Mark says he took them in his arms and blessed them. (Mark 10: 13-16.)"

"I want to ask you all a question," said John Suete. "In all your study and searching in the New Testament,

have you ever seen a single command or example for infant baptism?"

No one answered for a moment, then Deacon Rames said: "I don't believe there is such a command. Furthermore, no Pedobaptist has, to my knowledge, ever presented a passage sufficiently plain to satisfy the conscience of Bible readers. Every Scripture brought to prove the doctrine of infant baptism has been shown by Pedobaptist scholars not to prove it. Look at the army of noted teachers who say there is no such command:

"Moses Stewart: 'Commands, or plain and certain examples, in the New Testament relative to it, I do not find.'

"Drs. Wood and Wall: 'It is a plain case that there is no express precept respecting infant baptism in our sacred writings.'

"Professor Lange: 'All attempts to make out infant baptism from the New Testament fail. It is totally opposed to the spirit of the apostolic age, and to the fundamental principles of the New Testament.'"

"If these things are true, when did infant baptism begin?" asked some one.

"It must have been as late as the third century. Compulsory infant baptism was unknown before the Council of Nice (321 A.D.). Infant baptism has no meaning without Christian family life.

"Tertullian (150-220 A.D.), as translated by Dr. Wall, says: 'Our Lord says, indeed, do not forbid them to come. Therefore, let them come when they are grown up; let them come when they understand, when they are instructed whither it is that they come.'

“Hyppolytus (about 240 A.D.): ‘We, in our days, never defended the baptism of children, which in our day had only begun to be practiced in some regions.’”

“Didn’t baptism come in the room of circumcision?” asked Mrs. Rames.

“No!” was the reply. “Circumcision was typical of a circumcised heart.—Rom. 2: 29; Col. 2: 11. Baptism is a type of a burial and resurrection.—Col. 2: 12. A type can not be a type of a type, therefore circumcision can not be a type of baptism.

“When the question of circumcision was brought before the church at Antioch (Acts 15: 1-35), the matter was referred to the apostles at Jerusalem. They sent a letter to the church in which they said nothing about baptism in the room of circumcision. Had there been any such teaching, they would certainly have mentioned it in this connection. Again, if we rightly consider the differences between the two rites, we will find them too great to have any connection.

“(1) Circumcision was for males only. Baptism for males and females.

“(2) Circumcision was by positive law, and ministered to the subject on the eighth day. Baptism is administered when the subject requires it.

“(3) Circumcision was a parental duty (Genesis 17: 11-14). Baptism is a personal duty (Acts 2: 37, 38).

“(4) Every male child that was not circumcised was to be cast out (Genesis 17: 14). Who is there that will say that of unbaptized infants?

“(5) Circumcision extended to all the male servants in the house of the Jew, even those bought with his

money. This rule is never followed in regard to baptism.

"(6) If circumcision was merely a forerunner of baptism, why did Peter command the Jews on Pentecost to repent and be baptized?"

"(7) If baptism is in the room of circumcision, why was Paul baptized?"

"There are several reasons why infant baptism can not be universally accepted," began the Professor. "It conflicts with the command of Jesus to baptize believers, and it is based on the folly of water regeneration—I mean by that the belief that baptism only will wash away the sins of the person baptized. Of course if infants are guilty of that theological thing called original sin, they would be proper subjects for baptizing; but as that is only imagination, infant baptism is pure nonsense."

"Did not Paul teach that children as well as adults should be baptized?" asked Mrs. Upton. "I read in his letter to the Hebrews: 'For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling them that have been defiled, sanctify unto the cleanness of the flesh' (Heb. 9: 13). Again: 'For when every commandment had been spoken by Moses unto all the people according to the law, he took the blood of the calves and the goats, with water and scarlet wool and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book itself, and all the people' (Heb. 9: 19)."

"This was a type of cleansing by Christ's blood, as we learn if we read more. 'For if the blood of goats and bulls, and the ashes of a heifer sprinkling them that have been defiled [not the innocent and pure], sanctify them unto the cleansing of the flesh, how much more shall the blood of Christ, who through the eternal Spirit offered

himself without blemish unto God, cleanse your conscience from dead works to serve the living God.' Again: 'This is the blood of the covenant which God commanded you-ward. Moreover, the tabernacle and all the vessels of the ministry he sprinkled in like manner with the blood.' In all these instances ashes, blood and water were sprinkled upon persons and vessels. See Exodus 24:8; Leviticus 16:14; Numbers 19:17-19. The Hebrews to whom Paul wrote understood these to refer to the sacrificial services."

At the conclusion of these remarks a general conversation ensued, during which Deacon Rames and the Professor promised to convince those who were not yet satisfied that Pedobaptism had no grounds for existence, **at the same time** challenging the believers in infant baptism to produce a single precept or command for their belief. Several of the members expressed themselves as satisfied with the explanations given. Others, among them Mr. Title, Mr. Thomas, Mrs. Sherndon and Mrs. Suete, denied that infant baptism had been overthrown, and agreed to produce Scriptural evidence for the practice. The meeting then adjourned to meet the next week, according to its usual custom.

CHAPTER VII.

SOME BAPTISMS.

Thursday evening brought such an increased attendance that they could not be comfortably seated. Because of this, it was decided not to hold a regular meeting, but to appoint a committee to secure a hall for the future. With this understanding the meeting adjourned.

The committee had considerable trouble to find a suitable place, but finally decided on a store room that could easily be arranged for meetings. The members were then notified through the columns of the *Gazette* and the *News*, and met three weeks from the last meeting.

All were delighted with their new quarters and eager to continue their meetings. Hence, as soon as they could come to order, Mrs. Suete attacked the Professor and Deacon Rames by telling them that she had several long talks with her pastor on the subject of baptism, and had come to the conclusion that their promises were mere bombast and could not be fulfilled. And, further, that if they had read the household baptisms, especially that of Lydia's, they would not have made such promises.

"I suppose Mrs. Suete's idea is that Lydia's household was baptized upon her faith," said the Professor.

"Yes! that is my idea. We are taught that we who are believers must see that the child is baptized and

taught, as soon as it is able to learn, the nature of the ordinance."

"That is my idea also," said Mrs. Bane. "Our Discipline says: 'In presenting this child for baptism, you not only signify your faith in the Christian religion, of which baptism is an ordinance, but also your desire that this child may early know and follow the will of God.'"

"If that position be upheld, it should naturally follow that when the wife was converted, her husband, no matter how mean and low, and her children, whether good or bad, must be baptized upon her faith. But even if we should admit that this doctrine is right, it would not prove that there were infants in Lydia's house. The word *household* does not necessarily include children. Hermes, whom Paul speaks of in Romans 16:14, says: 'Now I say to you, if you do not keep them, but neglect them, you will not be saved, nor your children, nor your house' (Com. 12, Chap. 3). Again he says: 'These things shall you observe, with all your children and your house' (Sim. 5, Chap. 3). So, also, Moses, in Genesis 47:24, says: 'Ye shall give the fifth part to Pharaoh, and four parts shall be your own, for seed of the field, and for your food, and for them of your households, and for food for your little ones.'

"To prove that Lydia had infant children you must assume: (1) That she was married. (2) That she had children. (3) That one or more were infants. (4) That they were with her.

"We learn by reading Acts 16:40 that the converts in Philippi were old enough to appreciate the sufferings of Paul and Silas, and to be comforted by them."

"Why did you say we must assume that she had children with her? How do you know that she wasn't at home?" asked some one.

"The Scriptures (Acts 16: 13-15) tell us that Lydia was a seller of purple of the city of Thyatira, and her conversion occurred in Philippi."

"Professor, I believe you and the Deacon claim that no one has been baptized unless they have been immersed?" interrupted Mr. Title. "Isn't that too strong a view? I don't believe that either the Savior or his apostles gave us a clear command as to just how much water should be applied, or the manner in which it is to be used. To claim that none can be regarded as in the visible church who do not baptize precisely as we do denotes, as I think, a want of careful study, as well as Christian courtesy."

"Yes! And the Bible says John baptized in the wilderness," cried Mrs. Bane. "If he immersed, where did he find enough water?"

"And Matthew says Jesus came to Jordan to be baptized of him. I don't see any immersion there," responded Mrs. Thomas.

"Allow me to read the full account of John's baptism," was the reply, "and maybe we can find some grounds for immersion:

"1. 'Then went out unto him Jerusalem and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, and they were baptized of him in the river Jordan.'—Matt. 3: 5, 6

"2. 'And Jesus, when he was baptized, went up straightway from the water.'—Matt. 3: 16.

"3. 'And there went out unto him all the country of

Judaea, and all they of Jerusalem; and they were baptized of him in the river Jordan.'—Mark 1: 5.

"4. 'And it came to pass in those days that Jesus came from Nazareth of Galilee, and was baptized of John in the Jordan.'—Mark 1: 9.

"5. 'And John also was baptizing in Aenon, near to Salem, because there was much water there.'—John 3: 22.

"The plain teaching of these passages is that John was baptizing in the river Jordan, not at or near by; that Jesus was baptized in (the marginal reading is *into*) the river; that he came up out of the water, and that after being baptized he came from the water. Had John been sprinkling, it would not have been necessary to be baptized where much water could be found. Again, if sprinkling or pouring are modes of baptism, we can substitute them for that word; but you know that is impossible, for to sprinkle means to scatter or disperse in small drops or particles, and to pour means to cause to flow, as a liquid."

At the conclusion of these remarks, Rev. Showter, who was present, arose and said: "After a close study of God's holy Word, I must conclude that John's baptism was a Jewish ceremony of purification. He was a priest, and was engaged in his official work according to the law of Moses. The common people and the authorities of the Jewish Church recognized this, and there never was any controversy concerning it. The law never required immersion, hence Christ must have been baptized by sprinkling, according to the Jewish law and custom."

"I would like to know where the gentleman learned all this?" said Deacon Rames. "If the Jews were sat-

ified with him, and he was performing a well-known Jewish ceremony, why did they ask, 'Who art thou? What sayest thou of thyself?' (John 1:19, 22.) And why did John reply, 'I am the voice of one crying in the wilderness'? (John 1:23.) Why didn't he say, I am one of your priests, performing a Jewish ceremony? Undoubtedly because he was not a priest, and was not performing the Jewish ceremony of purification. It is certain that they did not recognize him as a priest, for they reasoned in their hearts concerning him whether haply he were the Christ, and they asked him, 'Why baptizeth thou, if thou art not the Christ, neither Elijah, neither the prophet?' "

"They must have known that the Christ was to come from the tribe of Judah, not from the priestly tribe of Levi." added a member. "'But thou, Bethlehem Ephratah, which art little to be among the thousands of Judah, out of thee shall one come forth unto me that is to be a ruler in Israel' (Micah 5:2). 'The scepter shall not depart from Judah, nor the ruler's staff from between his feet, until Shiloh come' (Gen. 49:10)."

"Adam Clark, the noted commentator, says: 'The baptism of John was by plunging the body after this same manner as the washing of unclean persons was.'"

"How could the apostles baptize three thousand people in one day if they did it by immersion?" asked Mr. Upton.

"If you will figure a little, you will find that the twelve could do it, from noon to six o'clock, by immersing forty-three persons each every hour. To show you how easy this would be, let me read an excerpt from *The Christian News*, Bethany, Nebraska March, 1903:

'Last Sunday we immersed forty in the river in seventeen and one-half minutes.' "

"Allowing that they could have baptized that many, where could they have found water enough?"

"In the pool of Siloam (John 9:7, 11); the pool of Bethesda (John 5:7), or any of the other pools in the neighborhood. The pool of Siloam was six feet by ninety, large enough itself for the purpose."

"But does the word always mean *into*?" persisted Mr. Title. "I heard a minister say the other day that they came to a certain water and came up from the water."

"If you will carefully read the account of the eunuch's baptism, you will find it was otherwise. They came unto a certain water — went down both into the water — Philip baptized the eunuch — they came up out of the water."

"The word translated *into* is *eis*, and is used as follows: 'Gather the wheat into [*eis*] the garner.'—Matt. 3:12; 'Be cast into [*eis*] prison.'—Matt. 5:25; 'If it fall into [*eis*] a pit.'—Matt. 12:11; 'Which is taken from you into [*eis*] heaven.'—Acts 1:11; 'They brought him into [*eis*] the upper chamber.'—Acts 9:39. There are many other instances, but these will suffice."

"I want to hear more about those household baptisms," said Mrs. Suete. "How was the jailor's family baptized while Paul and Silas were in the dungeon?"

"The baptisms didn't take place in the dungeon," replied the Deacon. "When the keeper of the prison learned that his prisoners were safe, he called for a light, and sprang in and fell down before them, and brought them out. Then he asked, 'Sirs, what must I do to be saved?' After they had spoken to him the word of the

Lord, and *to all that were in his house*, the jailor took them — most probably to the river that runs close by, where also they found Lydia. After the baptism he brought them into his house."

"Paul wasn't dipped," cried an angry voice from the rear of the hall. "Ananias said to him, 'Arise and be baptized.' *Anastis* means having arisen, or to stand. So Paul must have stood up, and was sprinkled right there in the house."

"I am afraid our friend has drawn somewhat on his imagination," said Professor Harwood. "Liddell and Scott define *anastas*, to arise, to leave their homes. Thayer defines it, to leave a place, to go elsewhere. Paul himself tells us how he was baptized: 'We were buried therefore with him through baptism into death, that like as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we also might walk in newness of life' (Rom. 6: 4). Again: 'Having been buried with him in baptism, wherein ye were also raised with him through faith in the working of God, who raised him from the dead' (Col. 2: 12). Ananias told Paul to wash away his sins in baptism. The word *lono*, wash, is defined by Robinson, *to wash the entire body*. By Liddell and Scott, *a washing or bathing*."

"If the members of the club have no objection, I would like to add a little to what has been said," began the Baptist minister, rising.

"The Hebrew word *tabillah*, baptism, from the root *tabal*, signifies everywhere submersion, never sprinkling or pouring."

"The Hebrew Lexicons define the word by immersion or its equivalent.

"Gesenius: '*Immersit, submersus est.*'

"Tregelles: 'To dip, to dip in, to immerse.'

"Englishman's Hebrew and English Concordance: 'Dip.' In Job 9:31, 'plunge.'

"Swing's Exhaustive Concordance: 'Dip, plunge.'"

Rev. Morner followed the Baptist minister, and caused some little excitement by saying: "Friends, I am sorry to see you meeting here from night to night engaged in this needless wrangle. You can accomplish nothing in this way. These questions have been settled long ago, and you can not add one iota of information about them. You will only unsettle your faith in the things of God. If you would all pray more and read less, you would be better off. God always had infants in his kingdom, and you can't put them out; therefore we must have them in the church."

"What do you mean by the church?" asked John Suete. "Do you have infants in your church?"

"You know as well as I do what I mean. Let me repeat. Cease this needless wrangling; it will cause you to lose faith in God."

"Yes, I know what you, or rather what your Discipline means by the church, and that is the reason I asked. Your Discipline [Art. 13] says: 'The visible church of Christ is a congregation of faithful men, in which the pure word of God is preached and the Sacraments duly administered according to Christ's ordinance, in all those things that of necessity are requisite to the same.' You surely do not find infants in that kind of a church."

This effectually silenced the gentleman, and after some general conversation, the club agreed to continue the subject at the next meeting. Some of the members agreed that immersion was all right, but that sprinkling was somewhere in the Bible. Some were certain that some one mentioned sprinkling water upon people. Others thought that if they were baptized with the Holy Ghost, it made no difference whether they were baptized with water or not.

CHAPTER VIII.

SPRINKLE AND DIP.

The next Thursday was a rainy one, and many prophesied a failure, because people do not attend religious meetings on stormy nights — that is, some people do not. But so great was the interest in the investigations that all the members and quite a few visitors were present. The Deacon and the Professor, conscious of the strength of their position, were ready to begin the investigation and uphold their doctrines. Several of the others talked and acted as if they had come into possession of some new and irrefutable arguments on pouring and sprinkling.

After the usual preliminaries, Dr. Sherndon began the discussion by telling the Professor that he had found a passage in Ezekiel which said, “I will sprinkle clean water upon you,” and asked him to explain it.

“The language of the text (Ezek. 36: 24, 25) was spoken while the Jews were in Babylon. It told them what God would do for them. Three things are mentioned: (1) ‘I will take you from among the heathen and gather you out of all countries and bring you into your own land.’ (2) ‘Then will I sprinkle clean water upon you.’ (3) ‘From all filthiness and from all your idols will I cleanse you.’ The text says they were unclean; then we must go to the law of cleansing for light. By referring to Numbers 8: 7, we learn that ‘Thus

shalt thou cleanse them: Sprinkle the water of purifying [expiation, R. V.] upon them, and let a razor pass over all their flesh, and let them wash their clothes and cleanse themselves.' This water of purifying or cleansing was sprinkled upon all who were legally unclean. It was living water, in which the ashes of a red heifer were mixed. The manufacture of this cleaning water is described in Numbers 19. With this knowledge we can return to the prophecy. The Jews in captivity were legally unclean because of their contact with idolatry. The Lord promised to return them to their land and then purify them. This can have no reference to baptism, and those who practice sprinkling for baptism do not follow this law."

"The Professor forgot one passage which, I am sure, must mean baptism, because it states that Christ was to do it."

"Will you please read it?"

"Yes, sir! 'Like as many were astonished at thee; his visage was so marred more than any man, and his form more than the sons of men: so shall he sprinkle many nations; kings shall shut their mouths at him: for that which had not been told them shall they see; and that which they had not heard shall they understand.'"

"There are two ways of looking at this Scripture: 1. If the word *sprinkle* belongs in the text, it refers to the blood sprinkled on Calvary for all nations. 2. The Revised Version gives *startle* in the margin. If you read the verses in this light, it will make good sense. We know that Christ baptized no one, so we conclude that this has no reference to baptism. I understand Mr. Sute

has been examining different translations, and I will ask him to give us the results of his study."

"I have found the following:

"'Like as many were astounded at thee; so disfigured was his visage beneath man's and his form so unlike man's: so shall he make many nations start up.'—*Orelli*.

"'So shall the nations he startles be many.'—*George Adam Smith*.

"'The word means *to cause to spring or leap*; when applied to fluids it means *to spirt, to sprinkle*.'—*A. B. Davidson*.

"The Septuagint renders it: 'Many nations shall wonder at him.'

"Driver says: 'The rendering sprinkle . . . is indefensible upon grammatical grounds. . . . Most moderns obtain the rendering, *cause to leap*.'

"Delitzsch says it is an upstarting in amazement that is meant."

"Can you give us any history of the beginning of sprinkling as a church ordinance?" asked a member.

"It is impossible to say when sprinkling was first introduced, although we know it was after the close of the first century. The first definite law for sprinkling was made by Pope Stephen II. about 753 A.D. The earliest instance of sprinkling I have been able to find occurred in A.D. 250. Of this event Eusebius says: 'Being delivered by the exorcists, he fell into a severe sickness, and as he seemed about to die, he received baptism by affusion on the bed where he lay, if, indeed, we can say such a one did receive it.'—*Nicene Fathers, Vol. I.*

“As late as 754 A.D. sprinkling was in disrepute. The monks of Cressy asked Pope Stephen II.: ‘Is it lawful in case of necessity, occasioned by sickness, to baptize an infant by pouring water on its head from a cup or the hand?’ The Pope replied: ‘Such a baptism performed in such a case of necessity shall be accounted valid.’

“In 1311 A.D. the Council of Ravenna declared that immersion or sprinkling were indifferent.

“From that time on the practice became more general in the Western churches. The Eastern (Greek Catholic) Church never has recognized it as an ordinance.”

When John Sute had concluded, Rev. Dason arose and said: “I have listened patiently to your discussion this evening, and while I can not accept all that has been said, I have admired the way in which the questions have been answered. But lest some of you might think that immersion was the only mode of baptism, I want to present a few arguments I heard a Dunkard minister use the other evening. He reasoned that trine immersion was the only baptism, and presented the following proofs:

“1. ‘All illustrations with the same construction as the baptismal formula show a repetition of action. If by any possible means any one could formulate a sentence of like construction that can be satisfied with one action, he would surrender the entire argument.’

“2. ‘Tertullian connects trine immersion with and draws it from the language of Christ in the commission. In his refutation of the doctrines of Praxeas, he says: “After the resurrection, promising he would send the promise of the Father, and lastly commanding that they should immerse into the Father, and the Son, and the

Holy Spirit ; not into one name, for we are immersed for each name, into each person ; not once, but thrice.”’

“ 3. ‘ Eunomius invented single immersion.’

“ 4. ‘ Christ was baptized by trine immersion.’ In proof of this he quoted the following, which is used by Longett, Wall, and others: ‘ Also, let the priests know that when they administer holy baptism, they are not to pour the holy water on the heads of the infants, but let them be immersed in the baptistery, as the Son of God in his own case furnished an example to every believer when he was three times immersed in the waters of Jordan.’

“ 5. ‘ The participial form *baptizing* in Matthew 28: 19 denotes a continuance of action.’

“ 6. ‘ Alexander Campbell, in his Campbell-Rice Debate, edition of 1844, said: “ Not only Mosheim and Neander, but all the historians, as well as Professor Stuart, trace trine immersion to the time of the apostles.” ’

“ I do not believe any one can refute these.”

And with this parting shot the reverend gentleman sank into his chair, a self-satisfied smile on his countenance, which, however, was speedily banished by the remarks that followed.

John Suete sprang to his feet, and, facing Rev. Dason, exclaimed: “ I am surprised to hear you, an advocate of affusion, attempt to defend trine immersion. I do not know what your members who are present think of it, but to me it sounds exceedingly strange. But to your arguments. The first will not bear investigation, as the following shows:

“ ‘ Then spake Jesus to the multitude and to his disciples ’ (Matt. 23: 1). One speech to two classes.

“ ‘To the acknowledgment of the mystery of God and of the Father and of Christ’ (Col. 2:2). One acknowledgment; but it includes God and the Father and the Christ.

— “His fifth argument is simply preposterous. If that were true, who could decide when the continuance ceased?”

“I happen to know that his second argument is false,” interrupted Dr. Sherndon. “Tertullian, on *The Soldier’s Crown*, chapter 3, says: ‘Then we are three times immersed, answering somewhat more than the Lord prescribed in the Gospels.’ And his third argument is as weak as the others. No Lexicon gives such a definition either of *baptizo*, the Greek word, or *tabal*, the Hebrew word for baptize. The claim that Eunomius invented single immersion is first heard of in the fifth century. Theodoret, in his attack upon Eunomius, says he subverted the law of holy baptism, which had been handed down from the beginning from the Lord and the apostles, asserting that it was not necessary to immerse the candidate for baptism thrice, but to immerse once only. Theodoret lived a century later than Eunomius.

“Sozomen, who lived in the fifth century, says: ‘Some say that this Eunomius is the first who dared to bring forward the notion that divine baptism ought to be administered by a single immersion, and to corrupt the tradition which has been handed down from the apostles.’

“Neither of these are competent witnesses, for they speak from hearsay only.

“As to his fourth argument, it is also lacking in necessary force. The quotation was made too late in history

to amount to anything. It is the mere assertion of an English Council held in Celichyth about 816 A.D."

"I want to correct the statement made concerning A. Campbell," said Professor Harwood. "It is a typographical error that was made in part of the first edition. When the mistake was noticed, Mr. Campbell had the presses stopped and the error corrected. In his *Millennial Harbinger* of 1860 he makes a full explanation of this."

Not daunted by these replies, Rev. Dason returned to the attack with: "It would be impossible to immerse all nations. Some are too far north, others are in the desert of Sahara, or the snow-clad Sierras, and others are sickly."

"It didn't take very long for Mr. Dason to get from much water to very little," laughingly replied Professor Harwood. "And I think it probable that he will change again. He tells us that it would be impossible to immerse in all nations on account of altitude and latitude. This argument will hardly hold water — excuse the pun. Let us notice what he presents. First, some are too far north. Any one who has ever read of the Esquimaux knows that they are great fishermen. They are not a bit afraid of water. It is well for us to remember that water freezes at 32°, and therefore can not be colder than that in liquid form. Second, some live in the desert. Recent explorations show that the Sahara is not a total desert; besides the many oases, a string of small lakes have been discovered. Third, some are sickly. I have never heard of a case where immersion in the name of the Lord injured any one. This subject was discussed the other evening, so I need say nothing more about it."

"Well!" persisted the minister, "there is one place in the Bible where people are said to be baptized by sprinkling."

"Where is that? We have never seen it," came a chorus of voices in surprise.

Turning to 1 Corinthians 10: 1, 2, Mr. Dason read:

"'For I would not, brethren, have you ignorant, how that our fathers were all under the cloud, and all passed through the sea: and were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea.' Again, in Hebrews 11: 29: 'By faith they passed through the Red Sea as by dry land, which the Egyptians essaying to do, were drowned.'"

"Now I would like you to find immersion on dry land. In addition to what I have read, let me call your attention to Psalm 77: 16-20, which must be a description of the baptism in the cloud and sea: 'The waters saw thee, O God, the waters saw thee: they were afraid, the depths also were troubled. The clouds poured out water'—let me repeat that—'*the clouds poured out water*, the skies sent out a sound: thine arrows also went abroad. The voice of thy thunder was in the heaven: the lightnings lightened the world, the earth trembled and shook. Thy way is in the sea, and thy path in the great waters, and thy footsteps are not known. Thou leddest thy people like a flock by the hand of Moses and Aaron.'"

"Rev. Dason has given us another of his great ideas. Did we ever hear of immersion on dry land? Why, certainly! Men are immersed in business affairs, in debt, in sorrow, or social affairs.

"We ought always to notice the element into which one is baptized. In this instance they were baptized in

the cloud and the sea. But, says Mr. Dason, 'the clouds poured out water.' His quotation from Hebrews, 'they passed through the sea as by dry land,' will disprove this by showing that the seventy-seventh Psalm refers to something else. If you will read the seventy-seventh Psalm in conjunction with Habakkuk 3, you will find this made clear. Psalm 78:14 refers to the passing of the Israelites, and tells us, as does Exodus 13:21, 22, what cloud it was. Paul is simply telling us that they were between the two walls of the sea, and covered by the pillar of cloud. This is in accordance with Psalm 78, and carries out the idea of an immersion, or overwhelming, and Mr. Dason's sprinkling 'has gone glimmering.'"

"Well, it doesn't make any difference, anyhow. If a man is baptized with the Holy Ghost, that is all that is necessary," replied the minister, followed by a chorus of hearty Amens.

"Rev. Dason, you don't believe anything of the kind," said John Sute, in a disgusted tone of voice. "If you did, you would quit using the line of argument you have presented, and you would also quit sprinkling water on infants and adults and calling it baptism." Then turning to the audience, he continued: "I notice that quite a few of you seem to agree with the gentleman, and I want to ask you a question. Where are we commanded to be baptized with the Holy Spirit? Another thing I want you to answer, Is baptism in the Holy Spirit a command or a promise? And I would like some one to tell me why you, who claim to be baptized with the Holy Spirit, do not speak with other tongues, as they did on the day of Pentecost and in Cornelius' house?"

"I have been making a somewhat careful study of this question, and have learned that there are four kinds of baptisms mentioned in the New Testament: The baptism of the Holy Spirit, the baptism of fire, the baptism of suffering, and the baptism of water. I mention the baptism of suffering, though the Revised Version omits it. Let us notice the baptism of fire first. God nowhere commanded this to be performed. It was for a certain purpose (see Matt. 3: 11, 12). Jesus alone would administer it; and it undoubtedly refers to the punishment of the wicked in hell. Second, the baptism of suffering. This baptism was that which Jesus himself was to pass through, that he might purchase the redemption of mankind. It was never commanded of any man. Third, the baptism of the Holy Spirit. None were permitted to administer this but Jesus himself. John said Jesus would baptize in, or with, the Holy Spirit. On the day of ascension (see Acts 1) Jesus told the eleven they would be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence. '*You shall be*' in this instance is a promise, not a command. Fourth, water baptism. This was preached and commanded to be observed by man. It was placed in the apostolic commission, and observed in its original form until the apostasy."

"Does Paul not tell us that 'by one Spirit we are all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles?' (1 Cor. 12: 13) asked Deacon Rames."

"The Revised Version translates it, 'For in one Spirit were we all baptized,' " was the reply. "The Greek word is *en*. This word is found in the following verses, and it gives the meaning of, *by the agency, or under the direc-*

tion of,—*i. e.*, we are all baptized under the direction of the Holy Spirit: 1 Cor. 14:6; Heb. 10:10; 1 Cor. 12:3, 9, 10. In 1 Cor. 14:6 *en* is translated *by*. 'Unless I speak to you either *by* way of revelation.'

"There are but few occurrences of baptism in the Holy Spirit, the first on the day of Pentecost, and another in the house of Cornelius. In both instances miraculous power was manifested, and the baptism was given for a special purpose, viz.: to sanctify the Jewish and Gentile nations unto obedience to the gospel. It was a special sign to both classes. Read Acts 1:3-8; 2:23; 11:15; 15:8, 9. In both instances the signs were the same. Peter says that 'the Holy Spirit fell on them [Cornelius' household] as it did on us at the beginning [the day of Pentecost]. Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit. Forasmuch, then, as God *gave them the like gift as he did unto us* who believed on the Lord Jesus Christ, what was I that I could withstand God?'—Acts 11:15-17."

"But does the Bible not say that the Spirit was poured out upon the apostles?" asked Dr. Sherndon.

"The revised rendering [Acts 1:17] is, 'I will pour forth *of* my Spirit,' so also in the eighteenth verse. This pouring is not called baptism. Let us notice the lesson. 'The people were amazed at what was seen and heard, and some said, These are filled with new wine. But Peter said they were^e not, but *THIS* is that which hath been spoken of by Joel' (Acts 2:12-16). What did he mean by *this*? It was what the people said was the effect of drinking. The description is: 1. 'A sound as of a mighty

rushing wind.' 2. 'It filled all the house where they were' (a complete submersion, you see). 3. 'Tongues, like as of fire, sat on each of them.' 4. 'They were all filled with the Spirit.' 5. 'They began to speak in other languages' (Acts 2: 4, 8). This overwhelming in the Spirit is the baptism. The promise or power was poured forth, the Spirit was not."

At the conclusion of the Professor's remarks a motion was made and carried to adjourn till the following Thursday, and another evening's investigation came to an end.

CHAPTER IX.

THE NECESSITY OF BAPTISM.

On the next Thursday, after the usual preliminaries, John Sute asked the Professor if he had anything new on the subject. Before he could reply, Mr. Upton surprised him by saying that they had spent enough time on the subject, and that baptism is a non-essential, and no one need bother about it.

"I am surprised to hear this," said the Professor. "If baptism is a non-essential, why do the churches practice it? Let me ask the ministers present if they believe it to be a non-essential?"

"Why, certainly! Almost every one believes it is only an outward ordinance," was the reply.

"Do you think any one will be saved without obeying the commandments of Jesus Christ?"

"No, sir, I don't think they will."

"Now, one more question. Is baptism a command of Jesus?"

"Humph!" was the disgruntled answer. "I don't take any stock in this idea of baptismal regeneration," exclaimed the Baptist minister. "That may do for Romanists, but not for Protestants."

"Those are my sentiments, too," responded another minister.

"That is not answering my question," urged the Professor. "Is baptism a command of Christ? Yes or No!"

"I believe that many good and honest souls have gone to heaven without being dipped," began Rev. Morner, when he was stopped by John Suete.

"Reverend, why do you not answer the Professor's questions? Are you afraid, if you tell the truth, that it will overthrow your theology?"

"My theology can take care of itself," angrily replied the minister. "It has withstood the assaults of infidels for more than a hundred years, and can withstand them for a hundred years more."

"I wonder if any of these good people who said 'Amen!' so lustily would answer that question?" asked the Professor, turning to the members. Receiving no reply, he continued: "Since you all seem afraid to answer, will some one tell me what baptism is for?"

"An outward sign of an inward faith — the door into the church," responded several, while the Baptist minister said: "It is a duty of every Christian. Some teach that it is for the remission of sins, but I believe that none but the regenerated, pardoned soul should be baptized."

"These several views do not harmonize with one another, and I think I will be able to show you that they do not harmonize with the Scriptures," said Professor Harwood. "Listen to God's Word. (1) 'John came, who baptized in the wilderness and preached the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins.' (2) 'Preaching the baptism of repentance unto remission of sins.' (3) 'Baptizing them into the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit.' (4) 'Repent ye and be baptized

every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of sins.' (5) 'Arise, and be baptized and wash away thy sins.'"

"Most of us who are here to-night believe that baptism is a non-essential," said Deacon Rames, "and that it is only to be administered to the regenerated. Professor Harwood's ideas seem to be in opposition to this. I, for one, would like him to give us the proofs of his position, for it is certainly a novel one."

This request was seconded by several, so the Professor said:

"I might mention quite a number of Biblical reasons why the unregenerated person is the recipient of baptism, but a few must suffice:

"1. On the day of Pentecost the apostle, in answer to the query, 'What shall we do?' was, 'Repent ye and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.'—Acts 2: 37, 38. You will find the same expression 'unto remission' in Matt. 26: 28 and Luke 3: 3."

"I do not consider baptism essential in that passage," exclaimed the Baptist minister. "The word translated *for* or *into* is *eis*; this is frequently used as *because of*."

"Amen!" responded Rev. Morner.

"Am I to understand you to say that repentance and baptism are done because our sins have been remitted at some previous time?" asked the Professor.

"Repentance is always for the remission of our sins," replied Rev. Morner.

"Then you make repentance and baptism of different

rank or force. In this you are wrong, as a few examples from English Grammar will show. 'Unto the remission of your sins' is naturally connected with both the preceding verbs ('repent' and 'be baptized'). It states the motive which should induce them to repent and be baptized. But let me present the rules and examples. Rev. Morner, what kind of a conjunction is 'and'?"

"A co-ordinate conjunction."

"Very good! Harvey's Grammar teaches that co-ordinate conjunctions are those which join *elements of the same rank or name*.

"Longwell's Grammar says a co-ordinate conjunction is one that connects *words, phrases or sentences of equal rank*.

"I give a few illustrations to prove the force of this: 'He fasted forty days *and* forty nights.' 'Loose him *and* bring him unto me.' 'He that believeth *and* is baptized shall be saved.' 'Repent ye *and* be baptized unto the remission of sins.' 'Arise *and* be baptized *and* wash away thy sins.'

"John Wesley, commenting on this, says: 'Baptism administered to real penitents is both a means and seal of pardon. Nor did God ordinarily in the primitive church bestow this on any unless through this means.' So you see I am not alone in regard to the teaching on this subject. Should I quote Titus 3: 5 and 1 Peter 1: 21, I would still find myself in company with the scholarship of the world.

"And now let me read from the Sunday-school Quarterlies and religious papers of 1897, when the International Sunday-school lessons were in the Book of Acts:

"1. '*Repent.*—The word includes the idea of sorrow for sins and the determination to forgive them. *Baptized . . . in the name of Jesus.*—That is, in dependence on Jesus Christ for forgiveness and in confession of him publicly as the Savior. *Unto the remission of your sins.*—Do it, be baptized, with this in view, that your sins may be forgiven; and they shall be.'—*The Independent.*

"2. '*For the remission of sins.*—If they would repent of their sins, and show by their obedience that they had faith in the great doctrines of the blood and of regeneration which baptism symbolized, God would pardon their sins.'—*Western Recorder* (Baptist).

"3. 'The apostles made Christian baptism inseparable from repentance in conversion. To ignore this sacrament is to impeach one's sincerity in repentance.'—*New York Observer* (Presbyterian).

"4. 'Repentance and baptism are set forth as the means toward this end, namely, that their sins should be remitted.'—*Sunday-School Times.*"

• "But doesn't *eis* sometimes mean *because of*?" asked Dr. Sherndon.

"I know of no instance where it is so used," replied the Professor. "The primary meaning of the word is *into* or *unto*, and contains the idea of direction and transition. The revised translators have used it thus in the following, as well as in other parts of the Book:

" 'I indeed baptize you with water *unto* [*eis*] repentance' (Matt. 3:11).— 'Preached the baptism of repentance *unto* [*eis*] remission of sins' (Mark 1:4).— 'Baptizing them *into* [*eis*] the name' (Matt. 28:19).—

'Baptism of repentance *unto* [*eis*] remission of sins' (Luke 3:3).

"*The Schaff-Hertzog Cyclopaedia of Religious Knowledge* (page 200) presents the same view: 'Baptism is rather the initiatory rite into the Christian church, the body of Christ—Acts 2:41; 5:14. . . . Baptism is a highly symbolical act. The washing of the body symbolizes the cleansing from sin spoken of as forgiveness—Acts 2:38; cf. 22:16, and 1 Cor. 6:11; as a cleansing by the word—Eph. 5:26; as a restoration of a good conscience—Heb. 10:22, 23. The power, however, to effect these changes lies not in the water, but in God. It also symbolizes the burial with Christ—Rom. 6:3, 4; Col. 2:12, by which the recipient is bound to die unto sin.'"

"Paul didn't think baptism necessary," persisted a voice. "He said Christ did not send him to baptize, but to preach the gospel. (1 Cor. 1:17.) As he was sent to preach the gospel to the Gentiles under a special commission, this ought to show his position. He was sent to open their eyes, that they might turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they might receive remission of sins and an inheritance among them that are sanctified by faith. (Acts 26:18.) There is faith, but no baptism, in that commission."

"But Paul did baptize," was the reply. "And if you will read Romans 6:4, 5, Col. 2:12, or Gal. 3:27, you will learn that he taught baptism. In the chapter which you mentioned he says he baptized Crispus and Gaius, and the household of Stephanus. (1 Cor. 1:14, 16.) At Ephesus he found twelve disciples of John whom he bap-

tized. (Acts 19: 1-5.) Do you suppose this was contrary to his orders? Why, then, did he say he was thankful that he had not baptized many in Corinth? Let Paul answer: 'Lest any man should say that ye were baptized into my name.' When we remember that the Corinthian Church was divided into several sects, we can see the necessity of this. Or it may be that he was simply referring to his personal work. Silas, John, Timothy, Mark or Barnabas might have done the baptizing, while Paul, on account of his 'thorn in the flesh,' confined himself mostly to preaching."

"I understood you to say, a while ago," said Mr. Title, "that John 3: 5, Titus 3: 5, and 1 Peter 3: 21 referred to baptism, and proved it necessary to salvation. Will you kindly give us your evidence for this position?"

"The consensus of all scholarship is that baptism is the act referred to in the phrase, 'born of water.' It is a figure of regeneration. Alexander Carson, the noted Baptist scholar, says it refers to immersion. Barnes, McKnight, Meyer and other noted commentators agree that the washing of regeneration (Titus 3: 5) is baptism. Possibly this little chart will aid us in this.

CHART.

Born of water and Spirit. John 3: 5.

Baptism, and gift of Holy Spirit. Acts 2: 38.

Washing of regeneration — renewing of Spirit.

Titus 3: 5.

"1 Peter 3: 21 is self-explanatory. Eight souls were saved through water, which also, after a true likeness, now saves us. How were they saved? By water, in

their faith in God and obedience to him. Baptism has an end, not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, but obtaining a good conscience toward God. With this view Wesley, Watson and many others agree. Baptism is necessary to-day, because Jesus said: 'He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.' To this let me add the following reasons in regard to the necessity of baptism. It has a sevenfold aim or intent: (1) Obedience to the Savior (Matt. 28: 19, 20; Mark 16: 15, 16). (2) Imitation of the Lord (Matt. 3: 17; Mark 1: 9). (3) To be born again (John 3: 5; Titus 3: 5). (4) To put on Christ (Gal. 3: 27). (5) To be put into the death of Christ (Rom. 6: 3-5). (6) Unto remission of sins (Acts 2: 38, 22: 16). (7) For an answer of a good conscience (1 Peter 3: 21)."

"If these things are true, every Baptist, and every one baptized without fully understanding all about the design, must be re-baptized," said the Baptist minister.

"Not so!" was the reply. "Jesus said: 'He that believeth and is baptized [immersed] shall be saved.' If any one in full faith in Jesus as Lord is immersed, God will certainly fulfill his promise. Because preachers deny that God will do certain things does not prove it to be so. You will find that those on Pentecost, even the apostles, did not understand the breadth of the message they presented. The people, however, obeyed from their hearts the form of doctrine delivered to them, and were made free from sin. You make a mistake: (1) By ignoring the fact that many who are immersed by the denominations understand the importance of baptism far better than their sectarian teachers. (2) By forgetting that multi-

tudes were baptized among the Jews who neither understood that Christ died for the Gentiles, nor that he was the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believed. (3) You must, to be consistent, denounce the faith and repentance of those who come from the sects as being sect-faith and sect-repentance, and therefore of no force, because they are taught by the denominations and submitted to by their converts. If we are right, then all that come from the sects must discard everything they have learned there, and everything that is practiced there, and regard themselves as unbelieving, impenitent sinners — a position, I believe, that no one will be foolish enough to acknowledge. One may come to Christ as he commanded, and may then embrace many errors, or become a Baptist, Methodist, or anything he chooses, without invalidating his previous faith and obedience."

"Friends, I have learned enough in these meetings to know that I have not fully obeyed my Savior. I am going to ask my pastor to-morrow to perform the ordinance of baptism at his earliest convenience," exclaimed Dr. Sherndon.

"So am I," replied Mr. Upton. "But I want to do everything understandingly, and there are many things I do not understand yet. Let us continue this investigation until we are all agreed, or at least until the majority understand their duty."

"I suppose most of us are agreed thus far," responded Mr. Title, "and that any of the preachers would gladly give us a church home; but I am afraid that will not help us any. How can we decide which church is right and which is wrong? Christ's church in the first century was

one body, and should be so to-day. These numerous denominations can not all be right. We can afford to make haste slowly and know that whatever we do is correct. I propose, therefore, that we allow the different churches to send representatives to our next meeting and state their positions."

This proposition was discussed with much vigor. Some thought it made no difference which church they joined; others claimed there was an invisible union, and that the churches were branches of one vine. Others again demanded that the true church should be sought for. Finally John Suete made the following statement:

"We are generally agreed that faith, repentance and immersion are prerequisite to membership in Christ's body. Some of us understand that we are not under law, but under grace. Some of us are united on the subjects we have investigated, and some are not. Deacon Rames believes that an experience must be given before one can be baptized. Professor Harwood thinks nothing of the kind is needed. Others among us have other theories about this. Again, we are not satisfied about the churches; and many other things I might mention. Let me, therefore, second the proposition to have the churches present their claims before us."

After one or two more had addressed the club, a committee, consisting of Dr. Sherndon, John Suete and Deacon Rames, was appointed to lay the matter before the churches and report at the next meeting. All present then agreed to do nothing more until all the churches had an opportunity to present their pleas.

CHAPTER X.

A DISCUSSION ON UNITY.

The next week was a busy one in church circles. The committee visited and re-visited the ministers and church officers, explaining the purpose of the club and endeavoring to have every church represented at the meetings. Much misunderstanding, generated by evil reports, had to be overcome. Some were bitterly prejudiced against the club, and had to be conciliated by the committee before they would promise anything, while others were fearful of some kind of a snare. When it was learned that the club would discuss the question of Christian unity, and had invited the ministers to come and present their views, excitement knew no bounds. Madam Rumor put on her best bib and tucker and visited all her neighbors with her varied stock of knowledge and conjecture. Mrs. A. knew that the club meant mischief. Mrs. B. understood that the members were going to join one of the churches in a body. Mrs. C. heard that Mrs. D. said that they intended to organize one of their own and reject all the teachings of the orthodox churches. Some thought the ministers should ignore the club's invitation and not attend at all. Others thought they should attend in a body and warn the members of their folly and the danger they incurred of being eternally lost. Still others suggested a day of fasting and prayer by all the

churches for the conversion of the club members. And so it continued until Thursday.

When the meeting was called to order, the committee had completed their work and were ready to report. As their somewhat lengthy report was presented, the members learned of the difficulties they had encountered, and the seeming indifference and opposition of the churches toward the work. When they were told that none of the ministers could be present that evening, some one proposed an adjournment until the next week. This was opposed by the majority, who thought that some phase of the subject might be profitably discussed at that time. Some things had been mentioned in the committee's report that had attracted considerable attention and caused rather caustic remarks. Several suggested that the club members present their views on unity. Not that they considered themselves superior in wisdom to the ministers, but that they might know how near they all were to the Bible teaching on the subject. It would also bring out the club's attitude toward those who, though belonging to different churches, might still be God's children. The investigation might also aid to unravel one of the most perplexing of problems and overthrow some of the inconsistencies of church divisions.

Dr. Sherndon was the first to take the floor to plead for a better unity rather than a closer co-operation of the churches. He had concluded that a union of individuals was superior to a union of denominations, claiming the latter was an impossibility because of conflicting theories and practices. He closed his remarks by saying: "We who favor the obliteration of denominational lines should

continually assert our position. We should not try to bring unity about by clandestine methods. The attempt to introduce unity through the agency of the so-called union meetings of the churches, which are considered especially for the young, will end in failure. If the lines which divide denominations are to be obliterated, the arguments must be stated in a manly Christian manner, and the whole question thoroughly investigated by mature minds. When this time arrives, we must not expect to accomplish final results by doing it by piecemeal, but by doing the whole at once. Every argument that can be brought to prove that union evangelistic or Sunday-school work is good can be just as strongly used for continual union of all Christians."

When the Doctor had concluded his remarks, Mr. Title arose and said: "I do not agree with the views just presented. I believe that denominations are necessary in order that all may find a suitable place of worship. We can not all see alike, and if these different churches did not exist, many would not know what to do, or where to go. Again, if the churches were all united and under one head, they would persecute their opponents, as they did during the Medieval Ages, when the inquisitorial horrors were a daily occurrence."

"I am afraid that Mr. Title is using stock arguments viewed from a church member's standpoint," replied John Sute. "While it is true, in a sense, that we do not all see alike, it is because we will not, rather than because we can not. The main reason why I am not a Christian is because of the many churches. They disagree with each other in theory and practice, and I have been unable to

find one that approached the New Testament ideal. If there were but one church, and that one based on the apostles' teaching, I would enter it to-morrow. As it is, I am debarred because I know not where to go. Another point in your argument that is weak is this: you want to suit man, when man ought to suit God. If God is the author of Christianity, everything should bow to His will.

"Were I to answer his second argument, I would do it by asking, Who would a united church persecute? Sinners? Surely not, for it is the province of the church to convert them. Would it persecute its members in other towns? It could not, for they would be of the same mind, preferring one another in love. The church of the Medieval Age was an apostasy — a false church — one that had no unity, unless we call the quietness of the graveyard unity. It was a church founded on persecution, folly and crime, and continues thus in our own day."

"The idea was presented a while ago that union exists, but is invisible," exclaimed the Professor. If we will read John 17: 21, we will learn the impossibility of this. 'Neither for these only do I pray, but *for them also that believe on me through their word*; that *THEY* may all be one: even as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be in us: *that the world may believe that thou didst send me.*' How would the world know that the churches were one unless they beheld the unity?"

"I am glad that these views are being presented," spoke an interested listener. "In my judgment, it is time for Christian people to look the matter of denominationalism square in the face as being morally wrong

before God. How can the gospel accomplish its great triumph and gather the redeemed from every land until the law of Christ be fulfilled by the sects becoming one? I hope that we will be able to find a common basis of action and belief."

"What name would we wear if the churches became one, as has been suggested?" asked a member.

"We can all unite under the name Christian," was the reply. "As followers of the Lamb of God, we can all glory in the name of Christ. We can all unite in the churches of Christ (Rom. 16:16) without violating Scripture or feelings. 'The name of the Lord is a strong tower; the righteous runneth into it and is safe' (Prov. 18:10)."

At this juncture Rev. Morner and the Baptist minister entered the hall, and it was immediately decided that the discussion be postponed and the club attend to the ministers' remarks. Upon being invited to speak, Rev. Morner advanced to the front and began:

"My dear friends! I am very glad to be able to be with you to-night. I have been very busy with my regular work, and was afraid I could not meet with you; but circumstances changed my plans so that I was able to come. I felt gratified when your committee visited me and so cordially invited me to address this gathering. I am pleased to see so many present and interested, and I earnestly hope I may be able to present to you to-night a plan of union that will be heartily accepted. In this age of sectarian bigotry we see the need of that broad catholic feeling that should pervade the church universal. I think you will find that the branch of Christ's kingdom that I

represent is as liberal as any. On the question of union we believe we are right. Why shouldn't we all come together as humble disciples at the feet of the blessed Master? We all have the same Bible. We all believe in the same Savior, and we are all pressing toward the same goal.

"I believe you will find Methodism suited to your needs. The great want of the world is Holy Ghost religion; you all need more fervency and devotion. All this you will find in the Methodist Church. But leaving this, let me turn to another part of our inquiry. Methodism has a work to do in the world that can not be done by any other church. In the address to the members by the Bishops at the commencement of the Book of Discipline you will find the following: 'We believe that God's design in raising up the preachers called Methodists in America was to reform the continent and spread Scriptural holiness over these lands. As a proof hereof we have seen since that time an extraordinary work of God extending throughout the United States.' Again they say: 'We esteem it our privilege and duty most earnestly to recommend to you this volume, which contains the DOCTRINE AND DISCIPLINE of our Church, both of which, we believe, are agreeable to the Word of God, the only and the sufficient rule of faith and practice. Yet the Church, using the liberty given to it by its Lord, and taught by the experience of a long series of years and by observations made on ancient and modern churches, has from time to time modified its Discipline so as better to secure the end for which it was founded.'

"As Methodism progressed and the want of a rule

was felt to aid its work, one was adopted. If its practical working was found to be good, it was retained ; if it failed, it was modified or rejected. Thus each regulation has been brought to the test of experience and utility. The Discipline is in strict accordance with God's Word, every article being taken from the Bible. I do not think I need to spend much time this evening on its contents, as most of you have undoubtedly read it, and I know that all of you can see that it is broad enough for the whole Church. We allow every member to choose his mode of baptism, so that all can be at peace with their God. You will find that we are not bigoted, but broad, lenient and liberal. Let me ask you to lay aside your minor differences and stand with us on this basis. Here is room for all."

When the gentleman had finished, Deacon Rames asked permission to reply. The chairman told him that any one could reply, or ask the ministers any questions they desired. The Deacon then said: "I, for one, am opposed to the theory that his Discipline is a basis for all to unite on. It was very kind of him to open the doors of his Church and usher us all in, but we are not all ready to enter. There are many things connected with Methodism that we Baptists do not consider Scriptural. He told us how broad and liberal his Church is, but does not tell us that it is not Christ's Church. His Discipline is much too narrow for us all to stand on"—

"Our Discipline is founded on the Bible, and is broad enough for all ; and let me add, we are as much a branch of Christ's Church as any," excitingly replied the minister.

"No, sir!" was the response. "According to your

former statement, it is founded on the experience of a long series of years, and on the experiments of bishops who tried to supply its wants by rules and regulations of their own make. Several of the articles contradict the Word of God, and also contradict your preaching and practice."

"Will you kindly tell us which articles contradict the Bible?" asked Rev. Morner, with a sneer.

"Certainly! I'll read them." And taking a little book from his pockets, he began: "'Article II.—Whereof is one Christ, very God and very Man, who truly suffered, was crucified, dead and buried, *to reconcile his Father to us.*'"

"I place this statement beside 2 Cor. 5: 18, 19, that you may note the contradiction: 'But all things are of God, who reconciled *us to himself* through Christ, and gave unto us the ministry of reconciliation; to-wit, that God was in Christ *reconciling the world unto himself*, not reckoning unto them their trespasses, and having committed unto us the word of reconciliation.'

"'Article IX. We are accounted righteous before God only for the merit of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ by faith, and not for our own works or deservings, wherefore that we are justified by faith only is a most wholesome doctrine and very full of comfort.'

"This is Lutheran or Episcopal doctrine, but not the doctrine of Christ. The apostles taught that we are justified by grace (Rom. 3: 24); blood of Christ (Rom. 5: 9); faith (Rom. 5: 1); works (James 2: 24), etc. James also states that we are justified by works, and not

by faith only (James 2:24). Agian he says: 'Even as faith apart from works is dead' (James 2:26).

" 'Article XVII. Baptism is not only a sign of profession and mark of difference whereby Christians are distinguished from others that are not baptized; but it is also a sign of regeneration, or the new birth.'

" Yet in the face of this statement Mr. Morner teaches that baptism is a non-essential, and tries in many ways to belittle the importance of the ordinance.

" 'Article V. The Holy Scriptures contain all things necessary to salvation; so that *whatsoever is not read therein, nor may be proved thereby*, is not to be required.'

" This article condemns the whole Discipline, so I need say nothing more about it."

" I have several objections to Mr. Morner's position," said John Suete, when the Deacon had concluded his remarks. " He forgot to tell us, when he gave the invitation to unite with the Methodist Church, which one he meant. I suppose he meant the Methodist Episcopal, but do not understand why the Methodist Episcopal South, or the Protestant Methodist, or Wesleyans, or Primitive, or any other Methodist denomination, would not be just as good. He should have explained why a political theory of a past generation prevents three of these, the M. E., the M. E. South, and the M. P., from uniting. Briefly speaking, the following are the main reasons why I believe the club can not accept Mr. Morner's invitation:

" I. The name betrays its origin. It is an offshoot from the Episcopal Church — the Church of England, of which Mr. Wesley lived and died a member. The Dis-

cipline (page 13) says that John and Charles Wesley, *Presbyters of the Church of England*, were the founders.

"2. The name *Methodist* is of heathen origin. It was given to Wesley and his friends by an Oxford professor on account of their habits. A Methodist was one of a sect of ancient physicians, or philosophers. 'Themi-son and his old set of Methodists resolved that the *laxum* and *strictum* . . . were the principles and originals of all disease in the world.'—*Hammond, Works*, Vol. 4.

"3. It began as a separate society in a rupture in the Moravian Church in the eighteenth century. Late in 1739 a rupture with the Moravians occurred. Wesley had helped them organize in May, 1738, the Fetter Lane Society; and the converts of the preaching of himself, his brother and Whitefield, had become members of their bands. But finding that they were falling into 'Quietism,' a separation took place; and so, at the close of 1739, as Wesley wrote, without any previous plan, began the Methodist society in England.

"4. It is divided into seventeen sects — some marked by race, some by politics, and some by church theories. In the apostolic days the churches were of one mind, and spake the same things. There was no distinction of race, etc., but all were one in Christ Jesus.

"5. It practices sprinkling, pouring and immersion, and claims they are three modes of baptism, when any child should know that immersion is not a mode of sprinkling, or sprinkling a mode of pouring. Methodists practice three different ordinances for baptism; the New Testament recognizes but one.

"6. It uses the mourners' bench, an invention of an

American minister. We have the following account of it in *The Life and Labors of James Quinn*, by John Wright: 'The first I ever saw or heard of it was in 1795 or 1796, at a watch-night held at the house of that mother in our Israel, the widow Henthorn, near Union-town, Pa. The person who conducted the meeting was Rev. Valentine Cook. . . . The sermon closed with an almost overwhelming exhortation, which appeared as if it must carry all before it. Then came the invitation to the mourners to come to the vacated seats to be prayed with and for. I think this was perfectly new, for the people seemed panic-stricken.'

"7. Its founder is not Christ, but John Wesley. The Discipline, pages 13 and 14, states the following: 'This was the rise of Methodism, as given in the words of its founders, John and Charles Wesley. . . . As his children in the gospel, they appealed to Mr. Wesley for help and advice.'

"8. Some of its definitions are false, as witness the following: 'God, everlasting, without body or parts.' This would make a fair definition of nothing. Again: 'There are three persons of one substance, power and eternity in the unity of the Godhead.' Neither nature nor the Bible reveals this.

"9. It is unscriptural, in that it makes the Bible bend to its Discipline.

"In paragraph 445 (Form of Receiving Members into the Church after Probation) the minister says: 'Do you believe in the Doctrines of the Holy Scriptures *as set forth in the Articles of Religion of the Methodist Episcopal Church?*' The candidate answers: 'I do.' Again he

asks: 'Will you be cheerfully governed by the Rules of the Methodist Episcopal Church?'

"10. Its teaching concerning the Lord's Supper and the baptism of infants is contrary to the Word of God. The early Christians met every first day of the week to partake of the Supper, and they baptized none but penitent believers. Your Discipline, Article XVII., says: 'The baptism of young children is to be retained in the church.'

"In addition to these I might mention many others that are equally strong in proving your church unscriptural. There are your human tests of fellowship, your teaching about conversion, your theory of the office and mission of the Holy Spirit, your theory of forgiveness and evidence of pardon. But these will suffice. I believe I can safely say in conclusion, You have been weighed in the balances and found wanting."

When John had concluded his objections, the Baptist minister asked the chairman if there was time enough for him to present his plea. "If not," he said, "I would prefer to wait until your next meeting. I think it would be better to have it all presented at one time, than to have a part of it to-night and the balance at your next meeting."

As it was growing late, the members decided to wait until the next Thursday to hear the plea of the Baptist minister. All agreed that the meeting had been helpful. Some thought that John had been too harsh in his objections, while others said it was only fair that error should be exposed wherever found. Many who were present determined to re-read their Bibles again, and carefully note where their church doctrines disagreed with it.

CHAPTER XI

SOME MODERN THEORIES

The arguments on the propriety of the clergymen visiting the club increased in number and intensity every day. Some applauded the club for its firm stand, or for "setting down on the preacher." Others blamed the minister for going where he had no business. "I jist knowed he'd get into trouble when he went thar," said old Brother Chanes. "He'd ort to knowed better'n to go amongst a parcel o' heathens. Why, they hain't one o' them that was ever converted, an' how'd they know anything about the gospel?" Rev. Morner himself felt a little sore at his reception. He had gone to the meeting confident of winning a victory for his church, and it was with bitter feelings that he now faced the comments of the town.

Nothing daunted, however, by the reception of his fellow clergyman, the Baptist minister determined to attend the next meeting and present his plea. One of his members had pleaded with him not to go, explaining the many rumors concerning the treatment the Methodist minister had received. To him he had replied: "I had been informed that they were a set of infidels and opposed to all forms of religion, but I found them to be a God-fearing set of men and women, who are studying their Bibles to learn the truth. They did not mistreat Brother Morner in the least. He presented his doctrine to them,

and they naturally found many objections to it. I intend to present our plea, and expect to have an enjoyable evening with them."

The gathering on Thursday evening was augmented by many visitors, who were anxious to see the next polemic battle. As soon as the usual gatherings and preliminaries were over, the Baptist minister began: "I am pleased to come before you, and I wish to express my gratification in finding you gathering yourselves together to study God's Word. I think you have done the right thing in this, though possibly you may have been overzealous in some of your work. I also think myself happy to be in a position to-night to present to you the claims of the Baptist churches. I most heartily agree with you that the Methodist Church has too much of man's inventions in it. The Bible is God's book, and no earthly creed can take its place. I come to you with an invitation to join yourselves to the Baptist Church: (1) Because it has an unbroken line of succession from John the Baptist until to-day. We have church records of some of our English churches that are more than three hundred years old. Jesus was baptized by John, and was a Baptist; the apostles were Baptists; and there have been Baptists and Baptist churches in every age since the church was founded. (2) One of the evidences of apostolicity is persecution. The Baptist churches have been persecuted in every century. They have withstood these persecutions, and though many of the members suffered martyrdom, they never lost their faith and zeal. (3) We have the doctrine and other characteristics of the apostolic church, as the following will show: (a) Our churches are inde-

pendent; each congregation is complete in itself. (b) We immerse all converts. The scholarship of the world agrees that immersion is right. (c) We are a missionary people; our mission boards are doing a great work.

“Some people have claimed that we are uncharitable, but this can not be proved. We recognize others as Christians, but claim they are not in the church. All the scholars agree that we are right on the mode of baptism. We believe that no one but immersed persons should come to the table of the Lord, therefore we invite only those of like faith and order. This doctrine is as old as Christianity. *The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles*, a manuscript supposed to be from the second century, teaches it. In Chapter IX. it commands: ‘Let no one eat or drink of the Eucharist except those baptized into the name of the Lord.’ We stand by the Book, and plead with all to come with us, that we may do them good. You have all been to the Baptist church and heard me preach, so I suppose it is unnecessary to tell you anything more about our claims. Besides, our good Deacon Rames has met with you continually, and undoubtedly has explained much Baptist doctrine to you. In conclusion, therefore, I ask you to carefully investigate our claims. You will find that the Baptist churches are right, because they are apostolic.”

“I can not agree with our friend about his Church and its claims,” exclaimed Dr. Sherndon. “I am not able to find the record that says John the Baptist founded a church, and am led by the remarks of the brother to suppose that he did. Jesus said concerning John: ‘I say unto you, Among them that are born of woman there is

none greater than John, yet he that is but little in the kingdom of God is greater than he.'—Luke 7:28. I object to the name Baptists wear. While it is not of heathen origin, like the name Methodist, yet it is given the wrong trend. According to your own teachers, if the Bible words were translated, *baptist* would be *immerser*, or *dipper*. For this reason your name is no name at all."

"The Doctor undoubtedly misunderstands me," interrupted the Baptist minister. "I am a Christian, a Baptist Christian; we use the name to distinguish ourselves from the other denominations."

"That does not strengthen your position any," replied the Doctor. "Paul tells us: 'If some of the branches were broken off, and thou, being a wild olive, wast grafted in among them, and didst become partaker with them of the root of the fatness of the olive tree; glory not over the branches.'—Rom. 11:17, 18. You are wrong in using the human name, for you are not honoring Christ in wearing it. Let me illustrate this by a story. A young man by the name of Johns married a young lady. The day after the wedding she said to her husband: 'Your second cousin, Mr. Smith, has a nicer name than you, and I believe I'll wear his name instead of yours.' The young husband demurred, but his wife persisted. Finally he said: 'You are my wife; you must wear my name, or I shall disown you.' It is thus with you; you claim to be married to Christ, but insist on wearing the name of his second cousin, John the Baptist. Again, it takes more to be a Baptist than a Christian. At our revival last winter fifty-seven were converted. You all agreed that they were Christians; after that they had to come before

your church and go through an additional ceremony before they became Baptists."

"They had to do that at the other churches, too," interrupted some one.

"That doesn't help matters any," was the reply. "In regard to your calling yourselves Baptist Christians, I would say that I think there is just as much reason in calling the branches grafted into the olive tree, pear olives, squash olives, apple olives, or potato olives.

"Our friend denounced creeds in his speech, but here [picking up a little book] is a volume entitled, *A Confession of Faith*, put forth by the Elders and Brethren of Many Congregations of Christians (baptized upon profession of their faith), in London and in the country. Adopted by the Baptist Association met at Philadelphia, September 25, 1724. If our brother says he does not recognize this, his line of succession is broken.

"Another objection to the Baptist Church is that it votes upon a member and declares him converted, and then teaches, 'Once in grace, always in grace.' If that member backslides, they vote him out, and declare that he never was converted, thus voting that their first vote was false.

"Again, I oppose the Baptist doctrine of baptism. As our friend stated, the world agrees that immersion is baptism, but in saying that baptism is a non-essential, and that immersion only is baptism, they place a non-essential as the barrier between themselves and others, thus opposing the tenor of Christ's prayer, that all (disciples) might be one.

"One more objection and then I will give way to any

one else who desires to speak. Baptists place their church above the kingdom, for they say an unimmersed believer can enter the kingdom, but can not enter the Baptist Church."

After Dr. Sherndon had taken his seat, Mr. Title arose and said: "There are several things that I find in the Baptist plea that do not harmonize. Rev. Immers said the *Didache*, or *Teaching of the Apostles*, taught close communion. It states the fact that immersed believers had the privilege of communing. Baptists do not allow any but their own sect to commune."

"The table is not mine, but my Father's," interrupted the minister, "and I can not invite any one."

"That reminds me of an incident," was the reply. "A Baptist minister invited a Presbyterian brother to preach for him. At the communion service the Baptist said: 'This is my Father's table, brother, and so I can not invite you to partake.' 'Yes!' was the answer, 'and because it is not yours, but my Father's, I will not await your invitation, but help myself.' And to the amusement of the congregation he did so.

"The brother boasted of his long line of succession. If he will carefully study history, he will learn that this line is broken in several places. He would learn that the Roger Williams church is the beginning of Baptistism in the United States. Williams was baptized by an unbaptized man, and then he baptized those who made up the first Baptist church in America.

"David Benedict, the noted Baptist historian, says: 'In 1639 he [Roger Williams] was baptized by Ezekiel Holliman, a layman, who was appointed by the little com-

pany for the purpose. Then he [Williams] baptized the rest of the company, and thus laid the foundation for the first Baptist church on the American continent.'—*General History of the Baptist Denomination in America*, pp. 441, 442.

"This made the baptism of the whole company irregular, and therefore, according to Baptist theology, invalid.

"Again, Baptists are not agreed on the subject of succession, as the following, from *Word and Way*, Kansas City, Missouri, October 14, 1897, teaches:

" 'Some of the brethren are about to trace our beginning as a denomination to one place and another. We think that after all we shall be able to settle down upon the following facts: From the third and fourth centuries there have been brethren who have kept closer to the true faith than did the people who developed into the Roman Catholic hierarchy. The faith and practice of these people were varied. Sometimes more and sometimes less Scriptural. At many times these communities held to doctrines which would utterly disqualify them for being called Baptists now. They were persecuted and slain by the Romish Church. The Baptist churches of to-day may be said to be the successors of these people. We dare not claim them as Baptists. They were not Baptists exactly like our Baptists of to-day. . . . Baptists, therefore, can not trace their history back to some man, as do the Methodists and the Lutherans. In the first place, in the very nature of the case there can be no Baptist church succession. A Baptist church is an independent organization, and needs no successor to constitute a church. If a local church ceases to exist, that is all there is of that church,

in the very nature of the case. The main question, in our judgment, is: Do our churches of to-day conform to the New Testament pattern?"

"Brother Immers told us that an evidence of apostolicity was persecution. If that be true, then we can accept the Methodists, Presbyterians, Lutherans, or Quakers as apostolic, for they were all persecuted by their opponents, Catholic and Protestant alike."

"Then we are an apostolic club, for we have been persecuted," interrupted a voice.

After the laughter that followed this sally, Mr. Title continued: "The claim that apostolic churches were independent can not be sustained. The Bible plainly teaches that they were one body. Therefore they must have been interdependent. Let me illustrate this, if I can. In this State there are many towns; while they may in a sense be independent, yet we know that they are not in fact. Each one is a part of one State, subject to the higher law, and therefore interdependent. So the New Testament churches were one, governed by the law of liberty.

"I need not mention any other objections, for I think it has been plainly demonstrated that the Baptist Church is not apostolic, and therefore not the one we are seeking."

When Mr. Title had finished, the presiding officer introduced Rev. Quenton, the Episcopal minister. This gentleman, like the others, had come prepared to overwhelm the club with facts and arguments that would prove his church to be the only right one, and to demonstrate the idea that all others were mere sects, and therefore unworthy of consideration. After thanking the President and members for the honor conferred upon him, he

said: "I am most happy to be present to-night and furnish you with such intelligence concerning our position as I can. I am always glad to find honest inquirers, and render them any service in this good cause. First, then, let me say I am not representing any branch of the church, but the church itself. We believe and practice the same things everywhere, hence are undivided. We have the only true creed—a creed that can be traced back with certainty to the beginning of the third century.

"The Church of England is the established national church of England, and adopts as its creed the Thirty-nine Articles, together with the Book of Common Prayer. In theology it has preserved the general features of the Protestant church of Europe, but it has retained in unbroken succession the three orders of the larger pale from which it came. It dates its existence as a separate national body since 1543, and received its distinctive doctrinal character at the adoption of its creed. Our doctrinal standards, as I mentioned before, are the Thirty-nine Articles and the Book of Common Prayer. To these may be added the Catechism, and the Homilies issued during the reign of Charles VI. Briefly mentioned, these Articles are: A profession of faith in the Holy Trinity and the canon of Scripture, a belief in the Apostles' and Nicene creeds, original sin, justification by faith alone, rejection of Romish theories, emphasis of the sole and supreme authority of the Scriptures, etc. In 1886, when our General Conference met in Chicago, we presented a basis of union in four articles:

"1. The Holy Scriptures of the Old and New Tes-

tament as containing all things necessary to salvation, and as being the rule and ultimate standard of faith.

“ 2. The Apostles' Creed as the baptismal symbol, and the Nicene Creed as the sufficient statement of Christian faith.

“ 3. The two sacraments — Baptism and the Supper of the Lord — ministered with unfailing use of Christ's word of institution, and of the elements ordained of Him.

“ 4. The Historic Episcopate, locally adapted in the methods of its administration to the varying needs of the nations and peoples called of God into the unity of His church.

“ I believe you will agree with me that this is a satisfactory basis, one which will appeal to all fair-minded persons. If my time was not so brief, I would like to speak of other things taught in the Book of Prayer, viz.: baptizing infants, baptizing those of riper years; the burial of the dead, the litany, etc., but this will suffice. If you are really seeking the true way, I can guide you there. Remember your vows and obligations to the great Head of the Church. Turn from the false ways to the true. Come with us and we will do you good.”

When Rev. Quenton had concluded his remarks, he picked up his hat, and, turning to the members, said: “ I hope you will excuse my leaving at this juncture. I have remained longer than I intended, and, as important business is awaiting my presence, I must hasten. I earnestly hope you will come to the Anglican Church and rest in the shelter of its folds.”

After his departure, Mr. Title suggested that they

defer the discussion of Episcopalianism until the minister could be present. This was opposed by several, one of whom stated that he understood the club discussions to be for the benefit of the members, and that it should be unnecessary to wait for any one. Mr. Lawsler followed this remark by saying: "Our friend here is right; we are to decide for ourselves what is correct according to God's Holy Word. Rev. Quenton has presented a basis of union according to his church theory. It now behooves us to decide whether it is satisfactory or not. For one, I believe it is not. I can not see wherein his church is apostolic. It is called the Anglican Ecclesia, the Episcopal Church, and the Church of England. In this country it is the Protestant Episcopal Church. It should be unnecessary to say that all of these names are contrary to the Word. As England did not die to save us, I think it folly to consider her name as a church name. *Episcopal* is derived from the Greek *episcopos*, an overseer or bishop. Individually, I don't want to join a Bishop church. The name *Anglican* also tells us where that church was started. Allow me to present briefly the history of the beginning of the Church of England.

"The rupture from Rome in England was not, in the first instance, the product of the protest of religious principle against ecclesiastical abuse. Henry VIII., in order to accomplish and justify his divorce, separated from Rome. Not only this, but he demanded that he be recognized as 'chief protector, the only supreme lord and head of the church and clergy in England.' Henry had no idea of a doctrinal reformation, and had very little sympathy with the continental Reformation. He was no

reformer from principle, and it was not till the reign of Edward VI. that doctrinal reform was accomplished.

“Another thing I object to is the Thirty-nine Articles. They, in common with all other human creeds, should be abolished. Their great mistake is that they smack of the age of persecution and folly. And the Historic Episcopate — you can trace it back to Cranmer, the Roman Catholic priest who was courageous enough to advise Henry VIII. In Rome you can trace it, in a manner, to Constantine the Great. But the line is broken at two different places, when women Popes occupied the chair of Peter. It is Romish in conception, theology and arrogance. It is apostolic in little or nothing. Its standard is so unsatisfactory to those who are not Englishmen that eight clergymen and twenty laymen, led by Bishop George B. Cummins, D.D., who had reached the conclusion that he could not, without sin, longer give his life to upholding a church as exclusive as the Church of England, met December 2, 1873, in New York City, and organized the Reformed Episcopal Church. They condemned the following doctrines of their former church as contrary to God's Word:

“1. That the Christian ministers are ‘priests’ in another sense than that in which all believers are ‘a royal priesthood.’

“2. That Christ's church exists in only one order or form of ecclesiastical polity, *i. e.*, the historical episcopacy.

“There are many other points that can be brought against the Episcopal Church, but I think these are enough to show that it will not satisfy our ideals. For

one, I wish to say that I am discouraged, and am fearful that we are seeking a mare's nest. Can it be that Christ's church has disappeared from the earth, and we are all in darkness? God help us in our search, that we may find the path that is true and peaceful."

Mr. Lawsler's closing remarks were deeply felt by all present, and many were the expressions of anxiety concerning their future quest. Could it be true that the apostasy reigned supreme? Ah, no! Somewhere in this great world God has a people who, like Israel of old, are worshipping the true God. Somewhere there are the seven thousand who have not bowed to Baal.

CHAPTER XII.

A SURPRISE.

Thursday evening found the hall crowded with members and visitors at an early hour, all waiting impatiently for the meeting to begin. The words of Mr. Lawsler could not be forgotten. Old catechisms and books on theology had been taken from their hiding places and carefully read; creeds and confessions of faith were studied, and some had re-searched the Bible for some light on the subject. Probably none had suffered as much as Dr. Sherndon. At his first opportunity he had re-read the long-forgotten Confession of Faith. The book had been in the house since his boyhood, but during the years of his married life had been read but little. Carefully scanning its pages, he was amazed, then dumfounded, at some of the articles. What passed after the reading of the book will never be known. Dr. Sherndon retired to his library and locked the door, and there, with no one present but his Lord, he fought his battle — and won.

When the time for meeting arrived, all were greatly disappointed to learn that Dr. Shellman was very ill and could not be present. But the surprise was greater than the disappointment when Dr. Sherndon arose and advanced to the front of the hall. All present could see

that he was laboring under suppressed excitement, but none could divine the cause.

Facing the audience silently for a moment, he began: "While I deeply regret Dr. Shellman's illness, I want to say that he could not convince us that Presbyterianism is apostolic. As you well know, I have been an elder in that church for ten years; but I am one no longer. My resignation was handed to the pastor yesterday. I have withdrawn from that church, and stand before you as an humble disciple of the Christ, anxiously waiting for a solution of our problem. During the past week I have carefully re-read our Confession of Faith, and have been terribly astounded at its contents. It has been years since I read the book, and I naturally supposed that in the time intervening the creed had kept up with the times. What was my consternation, then, to meet the medieval doctrine of Calvin strongly intrenched in its pages. Without argument I ask you to tell me, Can God be the author of such rubbish as this?

"III.—3. By the decree of God, for the manifestation of His glory, some men and angels are predestinated unto everlasting life, and others foreordained to everlasting death.

"4. These angels and men thus predestinated and foreordained are particularly and unchangeably designed, and their number is so certain and definite that it can not be increased or diminished.'

"X.—3. Elect infants, dying in infancy, are regenerated and saved through the Spirit,' etc.

"4. Others not elected, although they may be called by the Word and may have some common operations of

the Spirit, yet they never truly come to Christ, and therefore can not be saved.'

"But why read farther, why burden you with any more of this creed? Surely this is sufficient to have us know that the creed and the church are not apostolic."

"May they not have revised that?" asked a Presbyterian in the audience.

"I had hoped so, but on visiting Dr. Shellman, he gravely informed me that it was not only in force, but that the Presbyterian Church was opposed to revising it. Of the one hundred and forty-one Presbyteries that had reported on the matter of revision, one-third favored a moderate revision; one-third a supplemental creed, *i. e.*, a brief statement for public use; and one-third opposed any change whatever. He told me that he did not think it good policy to disturb the church by agitating the subject, the church being too divided to take action on any of the plans proposed. He also gave me a book by the great Dutch theologian, Abraham Kuyper, to read, marking several pages for my special benefit. While I may not be able to overthrow any of his arguments on the Holy Spirit, (the title is, *The Work of the Holy Spirit*,) yet his theology of Calvinism is as weak as Calvin's himself. I will read but a few extracts:

"'While the sinner is still dead in trespasses and sin, before the work of God has begun in him, he is already chosen and ordained, justified and sanctified' (page 306).

"'That God regenerates one and not another is according to a fixed and unalterable rule. He comes with regeneration to the elect, and the non-elect he passes by. Hence this act of God is irresistible' (page 307).

"According to his theory, faith is the gift of God — a direct gift — and he quotes in evidence of this Ephesians 2:8, 'For by grace have ye been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.'"

"Well! doesn't that verse teach it?" interrupted a member.

"Not if rightly understood," was the reply. "What is the antecedent of *it*? If you will turn to Matthew 16:18, you will find a similar sentence; so, also, in the verses preceding that. Let us notice these.

"1. 'Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Bar-Jonah; for flesh and blood hath not revealed *it* unto thee, but my Father who is in heaven.'

"*It*, in this sentence refers to 'Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.'

"2. 'I will build my church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against *it*.'

"'I will build' [my church] is the antecedent of *it*. In the Greek, *it* and *I will build* (*oikodomeesoo*) are in the same gender.

"3. 'For by grace ye are saved through faith; and *that* not of yourselves; *it* is the gift of God.'

"The phrase 'by grace ye are saved,' or salvation by grace, is the antecedent of *it*. Here again it is in the same gender as its antecedent. In the second sentence they are feminine; in this one, neuter.

"4. 'She is pretty, and she knows *it*.'

"Any one can see that *it* refers to 'she is pretty' in this sentence."

“ Doctor ! why should the Presbyterians want to revise their creed ? Why not do away with it ? ” asked Professor Harwood. “ The Bible is sufficient to guide us in this world and point us to the next. Creeds of all description are divisive, and hence should be discarded.”

To this the Doctor made no reply, but returned to his seat.

After the excitement caused by Dr. Sherndon's remarks had subsided, Rev. Showter, a Holiness minister, was introduced, and briefly outlined his theory and church polity. As much of it was like that of the Methodist minister, and as he was rather abusive, he was interrupted by so many questions that he finally lost his temper and left the hall in disgust. His main argument was sanctification as a second work of grace ; this to be found at the mourners' bench, and to make the recipient thereof sinless and keep him sinless.

That the modern doctrine of sanctification is in error in its conception of spiritual life was easily seen in the bearing of the speaker. His claims were too extravagant to merit a passing notice. His position of sinless perfection found no warrant in the few verses of Scripture that he quoted. Nowhere do the apostles claim to be perfectly sinless. Indeed, Peter sinned at Antioch, and Paul says of himself that he was not perfect.

John Sute was the first to present any objections to his doctrine. He urged the following against the use of the mourners' bench in religion :

1. It induces undue excitement, and therefore unfits the mind for sober decision.

2. It presumes to say that man's invention is just as good as God's law.

3. It makes conversion and sanctification depend entirely upon the feelings instead of God's commands.

Mr. Title then read part of an editorial from Elder Jesse Bowman Young, editor of the St. Louis *Christian Advocate*, a Methodist journal, in which he said: "The old type of revival services, in which a mourners' bench, a series of terrifically exciting exercises, and a sort of rousing and hortatory fervor were the chief features, are in many places wholly out of date, and it is not to be questioned that they are, in spots at least, permanently obsolete."

"There is one thing I would like to know," asked a young man. "I read in 1 John 3: 9, 'Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he can not sin.' Now, if we can not sin, why wasn't Rev. Showter's position right?"

This sudden appeal to the Scriptures silenced the speakers for a moment. Then Deacon Rames said: "I believe John was speaking comparatively. The Bible uses the words *can not* in several places that will possibly interpret this verse.

"1. In Nehemiah 6: 3: 'And I sent messengers unto them, saying, I am doing a great work, so that I can not come down.'

"Nehemiah does not mean that it was physically impossible for him to come down, but that his present work was more important.

"2. Hebrews 9: 5: 'And over it the cherubim of

glory shadowing the mercy seat, of which we can not now speak.'

"Paul did not mean that he was absolutely dumb, but that his subject was too important to dwell on another at that time.

"We say we can not go because more important affairs keep us; so with this verse, we can not sin because we have something more important to do."

"If our young friend will carefully note the definitions of sin, it may give him additional light on that verse," said Professor Harwood. "He will learn from 1 John 5: 17 and James 4: 17 that there are sins of omission and commission. In the verse read he is writing about positive transgression. Now let him remember that scholars consider the present tense in Greek to have a continuing force, and he will see that the Christian who makes a practice of sin has left his calling. In addition to this we are taught to abide in Christ, and John says (1 John 3: 6): 'Whosoever abideth in him sinneth not.' If we abide in a room, we can not go out; when we go out, we are no longer abiding therein. So with us; we may forget some time and transgress — step out and sin — but we can not continue therein and be in Christ."

While Professor Harwood was speaking, a well-dressed stranger had entered the hall and pressed his way to the front. At the first opportunity he arose and asked permission to address the club, stating that he was a representative of the Church of Jesus Christ, and an apostle. In his explanation of his peculiar doctrine he requested those present not to confound him with the Utah Mormons, or Brighamites, as he called them; he

was an apostle of the reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, and had no affiliation with the apostates of Utah. Speaking of the Book of Mormon, he said:

“No book is so little understood and so much misrepresented. Without it the scientific and literary world are at a loss to know the true history of the civilized people who flourished here centuries before the landing of Columbus. These people came here about 2100 B.C., but became extinct because of their wickedness. About 600 B.C. the Lord directed a colony to come here from Jerusalem. These people were blessed by the personal appearing of Jesus Christ (John 10: 16; Matt. 15: 24) after His resurrection and ascension to heaven. An abridged account of their religious book was made and hidden by Moroni in a hill in New York. An angel of God directed Joseph Smith to the place, instructing him to translate the work. The golden plates were seen and handled by eleven others, three of whom conversed with the angel. The book does not supplant the Bible, but is an auxiliary and a companion volume. Do not, then, be unbelieving; read, study, reflect; prove all things; hold fast that which is good.”

In addition to the above, he also gave them an epitome of the Saints' belief, and some general advice in regard to joining the Latter-day Saints' Church.

While he was listened to with interest, very little credence was given to his extraordinary claims. A noted lecturer on Mormonism had been in Westville a short time previous, and had given a complete exposé of the Mormon fraud. Some objections, however, were made

by John Suete and Dr. Sherndon, the principal ones being on the testimony of the witnesses and the peculiar geography of the book.

When John arose to present his objections, he said: "For the benefit of those who did not hear the lecture, I want to present the following objections to the Church of the Latter-day Saints:

"1. They are divided and at bitter war among themselves. The three leading sects are: (a) The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or 'Brighamites,' with headquarters in Salt Lake City. (b) The reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints, or 'Josephites,' with headquarters at Lamoni, Iowa. (c) The Church of Christ, or Hedrickites. David Witmer, one of the witnesses of the Book of Mormon, was their seer. I don't know who has taken his place. Their headquarters are in Missouri. These three sects do not agree among themselves as to what Joseph Smith said. They denounce as fraudulent many revelations of Joseph that each print, and refuse to recognize each others' books.

"2. They require faith in Joseph Smith, in the books he has produced, in the Mormon priesthood, and in continuous revelation. They also teach a baptism for the dead that is contrary to common sense and the Bible. For evidence of this I produce the following: 'I spent the day in council. . . . I told the brethren that the Book of Mormon was the most correct of any book on earth, and the keystone of our religion, and a man would get nearer to God by abiding by its precepts than by

any other book.'—*History of J. Smith, Millennial Star*, Vol. XVIII., p. 790.

“‘I send forth the fullness of my gospel by the hand of my servant Joseph.’—*D. and C.*, Section 35: 17.

“‘Men who honor the priesthood, honor God; and those who reject it, reject God.’—*New Witness for God*, p. 187.

“3. Their geography is false and ignorant. Lehi and Nephi claim to leave Jerusalem 600 B.C. They go into the wilderness, and the Red Sea is mentioned. The book says they left the Red Sea and went eastward many days. Again it says they traveled many days east. If any one would do this, he would land in the Arabian desert. If he continues east, the ‘big waters’ he reaches will not be the Atlantic, but the Arabian Sea.

“4. The so-called witnesses of the Book of Mormon are fraudulent, as the following will show:

“Martin Harris receives the following command or revelation: ‘And I, the Lord, command him, my servant, Martin Harris, that he shall say no more concerning these things except *he shall say, I have seen them, and they have been shown unto me by the power of God*, and these are the words which he shall say; but if he deny this, he will break the covenant with me, and behold he is condemned.’—*D. and C.*, page 174.

“Now let me show you a second fraud (*D. and C.*, page 176, April, 1829): ‘Oliver Cowdrey, verily, verily, I say unto you, . . . surely shall you receive a knowledge concerning the engravings of old records, which are

ancient, which contain these parts of my Scriptures, which have been spoken by the manifestation of my Spirit; yea, behold, *I will tell you in YOUR MIND and IN YOUR HEART, by the Holy Ghost*, which shall come into you, and which shall dwell in your heart.' ”

“ If I understand rightly,” said a member, “ that man could not have been an apostle, for he has not seen the Lord, nor heard the message from his lips, and has not been a witness of his resurrection.”

When this member had taken his seat, a silence deep and painful prevailed. Sectism was reaping that which it had sowed — sorrow, distrust, anguish, dissatisfaction, and turmoil. After weeks of study and research the churches presented nothing acceptable to the Bible students. Those who were members when the club was formed were to-day men and women without a church home. Babylon was behind them. Before them stretched the great future, with its unknown pathways. Should they continue their study, or should they disband without reaching the goal they had expected to reach? All these were discussed, without coming to any conclusion. Some suggested that they send for ministers of other denominations, but this was speedily rejected. What could they gather from any more denominations? Chaos and unrest, but not peace. Confusion worse confounded would be the only result.

Finally John Suete proposed they turn aside from denominational ministers and find a Bible plan. “ We have found,” said he, “ a satisfactory answer for all our subjects in the Bible, surely we will find one for this also.

I believe it will be safe for us to take our Books and find God's plan of union. We have learned that twentieth century denominationalism can not solve our problem. What, then, is left for us to do but go to God's Word?"

This proposition seemed to satisfy the majority of the audience, and without much discussion was accepted.

CHAPTER XIII.

GOSPEL MEETINGS.

When the people of Westville opened their papers the next day they beheld the following notice among the locals :

“Gospel Meetings.

“A series of gospel meetings will be held by D. C. Goodnow, of the churches of Christ, in the old Baptist church building, on Locust Street, beginning Monday evening, at 7 o'clock. We hope to see you at these meetings.”

Many of those who glanced through this notice read it again, and wondered what it could mean. None of the Westville churches were going to hold a meeting. Who could the stranger be? And the name he used — “the churches of Christ” — that name was foreign to church circles in the neighborhood. But it was a name that attracted the attention of the members, and caused many of them to decide to attend the meetings and learn about the man and his work.

During the day Dr. Sherndon visited the office of John Sute and suggested that they go to hear the stranger. But as John would be very busy Monday and Tuesday, he declined the invitation. The Doctor learned, however,

that several of the club members would be there, and that, judging by the conversation he overheard, a good many others would attend.

When the Doctor arrived at the meeting place Monday evening, he found fifty or sixty persons in attendance. The stranger proved to be a smooth-faced, keen-looking young man about thirty years old. The meeting was conducted without any ostentation; one thing that attracted especial attention was the absence of choir and organ, usual requisites of such meetings. The sermon was an interesting discourse on the resurrection. After the sermon he made the announcements concerning the future of the meetings, giving a brief outline of the line of thought to be presented. When the benediction had been pronounced, Dr. Sherndon pressed forward to where the speaker was getting acquainted with some of the audience and invited him home; the invitation was accepted in the same hearty manner in which it was given, and the preacher began making arrangements to accompany him. The Doctor was so anxious to learn more about the stranger and his church doctrine that he could hardly wait till they got away from the others who were still conversing with him. He knew that his wife would be as interested as he, so he refrained from asking the questions that were uppermost in his mind, and enjoyed himself as well as he could by explaining to him the troubles and triumphs of the club. To his surprise, the stranger became greatly interested, and indorsed the different positions the Doctor mentioned.

Mrs. Sherndon was delighted with the stranger, and the conversation begun on the way home soon became

animated. "To what denomination do you belong?" asked Mrs. Sherndon.

"I do not belong to any of the modern denominations," was the reply.

"Why, how can that be? I supposed every Christian belonged to some denomination."

"That is only a modern notion," replied the stranger; "the ancient church knew nothing of such things. Paul, you remember, rebuked the incipient schisms in the Corinthian church, telling them that they were carnal. Let me read it to you: 'Now I beseech you, brethren, through the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and that there be no divisions among you; . . . For it hath been signified to me . . . that there are contentions among you. Now this I mean, that each one of you saith, I am of Paul, and I of Apollos, and I of Cephas, and I of Christ.'—1 Cor. 10: 12."

"What, then, do you call yourself?" interrupted the Doctor.

"A Christian; that worthy name is all I care to wear."

"But how do you distinguish yourself and your brethren from other Christians?"

"Why should I, or my brethren, want to distinguish ourselves from other Christians? God is no respecter of persons, and we should all be one in Christ Jesus. A Christian is a Christian the world over."

"Will you not give us your reasons for your peculiarity?" asked the Doctor.

"I need only refer you to Romans 16: 16, or Matthew 16: 18, for the church's name. For the individual name I read first Acts 11: 26: 'The disciples were called Chris-

tians first in Antioch.' 'This name honors Christ and tells all whose servant I am.'

"But doesn't it unchristianize others?"

"No! If I say I am a Jones, it certainly does not prevent others from wearing that name."

'But may we not be Presbyterian Christians or Methodist Christians?'

"Paul says (Romans 11:17, 18): 'If some of the branches were broken off, and thou, being a wild olive, wast grafted in among them, and didst become partakers with them of the root of the fatness of the olive tree, glory not over the branches.' Now, what would you think if those branches tried to glory over one another by saying, I am a pear-olive, and am better than that onion-olive or that apple-olive over there? They were all olive branches; so we should all be Christians only. Again, Jesus said: 'I am the vine, ye are the branches.' Let us imagine a vine with pumpkin, potato, grape, squash and other branches. What a curiosity it would be! If we want to honor Christ, we must eschew human names. Have you never noticed how the name is linked with our lives and work in His cause?"

"We are baptized into his name. Matt. 28:19.

"We are espoused to him. 2 Cor. 11:2.

"We are joined to him. Rom. 7:4.

"We glorify God in this name. 1 Peter 4:16.

"We are reproached in his name. 1 Peter 4:14."

"Do you believe all can be convinced of this?" asked Mrs. Sherndon.

"I do not know," replied the stranger, sadly. "There

are many men of perverse minds who please self rather than God. There are others who fear the cry of popularity. But I believe there are many who are anxiously looking for better things, and I am placing great hope in these. A little leaven leaveneth the whole lump. A few may convince the many."

The conversation was continued until a late hour, the stranger bringing out many passages of Scripture to defend his position, and proving to the Doctor and his wife that on this one point at least he was right.

Those who have had some important question settled in a satisfactory manner can appreciate the feelings of the Doctor and his wife at the close of the evening's conversation. Here was a man who knew nothing among the people but Jesus Christ and him crucified — who gave a "Thus saith the Lord" for his belief, and was able to leave opinions out of his teaching. Educated and cultured, yet an humble follower of the lowly Nazarene, he was able and willing to teach others the Way of Life perfectly. The Doctor was determined that John should meet him and converse with him on the subject of religion.

The next morning, immediately after breakfast, the Doctor made several calls on his patients, and then returned home to take the stranger, whom we will call Brother Goodnow, to John's office. John had returned from his trip, and was sitting in his office reading a pamphlet when the two gentlemen entered. After the introduction and a few commonplace remarks, John told them he was reading a short article on Church Union. The plan, he thought, was excellent, but the writer had presented some things that were unscriptural, and by that

means weakened his plea. "I suppose," he said, turning to the stranger, "that you also have a plan?"

"Yes, sir!" was the emphatic reply. "A divine plan. I do not know whether I can convince the public here of this fact, but some will recognize it. Too many are yet groping in the twilight of gospel knowledge. Too few are standing in the sunlight of everlasting truth. Priestcraft is yet too powerful to be overthrown in a day; but each day finds some new influence to weaken its authority and dogmatism."

"What is your plan?" asked John, becoming interested.

"Briefly speaking, it is based on the Bible. You will find a basis in Ephesians 4: 1-6. If we take Christ at his word, we need have no fear of division.

"Since my conversation with the Doctor last night, I have decided to preach on the subject to-morrow night, and give any one who desires an opportunity to ask questions. I think this will be a good way to get it before the public."

"I am very much interested in your plan," replied John, "and will certainly be present."

Then followed a conversation on church names, the work of the club, the religious outlook and other matters, that occupied the whole forenoon, and brought the three men into a friendship that was never broken.

The evening meeting found a slightly increased audience at the chapel. The sermon was as interesting and instructive as the previous one. After the sermon he began to make the announcements for the following service. He told them to take a special invitation to the pastors of the town, for they surely would be interested

in saving souls, and getting into closer fellowship with one another. A special invitation was also given to the members of the club to bring their friends with them, because they had been trying to solve this same question. After a general invitation to all, and the announcement that he would have an open meeting after the sermon, when any one might ask questions on the subject, he closed with the usual benediction.

Of course this new departure from the established custom was thoroughly discussed the next day. That a minister would allow any one to ask him questions during a church service was beyond the comprehension of many. Why! some infidel might be there and ask a question, or some one might mention baptism or some other forbidden subject. It was contrary to orthodoxy, and would never do.

That evening the house was filled with eager listeners, the clergymen of Westville being conspicuous by their absence. Everything was done with devotion, and all noticed the earnestness and piety of the speaker. The sermon came fresh and warm from the heart of one who was a child of God. Of it, however, we can give only a brief outline.

After reading John 17, and briefly commenting on it, he proceeded to discuss the question as from a business man's standpoint. Three test questions were propounded: 1. Is it legal? 2. Will it pay? 3. Can it be improved? In answer to the first he said: "(a) Jesus prayed for it. John 17. (b) Paul commanded it. Rom. 15: 5, 6; 1 Cor. 1: 10-13; 3: 3-5. (c) The apostolic church possessed it.

Eph. 4:4; 5:27. What a contrast between that and modern denominationalism!"

For the second he read Amos 3:3 and Luke 11:17. Then presented the illustrations of economy of force and centralization. These were enforced by several practical lessons drawn from business and nature.

"The world is full of evidence that it will pay. It is the only thing that meets the demand. It is the only thing that will destroy warring sects. And it is that which the religious world seeks, but can not find, because of traditions and prejudice. Yet in their gropings many are asking for this unity.

"S. C. Eby, *Swedenborgian*, says: 'Can any one imagine Jesus Christ formulating the creeds? . . . When we reach the nineteenth century we find a wall of interpretation around the simple gospel of Jesus Christ so thick and solid that nothing short of a spiritual miracle will enable you to get a glimmer of the meaning of Him.'

"Dean Davis, *Episcopal*, writes: 'The weakness of Christianity to-day is in its divided condition. I think the various denominations should unite.'

"From Dr. Jessie Young, editor of the (*M. E.*) *Central Christian Advocate*, we hear this: 'We are not bound to accept the exact phases and forms of dogmatic truth which the fathers formulated.'

"Can this be improved? I say no! Let me present to you the condition of sectarianism to-day. I go into a little town of eight hundred people, and there are five churches and five men wasting their energies where one might do good. One church to seat six hundred people would be enough. I tell you the gospel can not accom-

plish its triumph until we become one, and these things are overthrown.

"What a contrast this divided state is with the description of Christ's cause in the Word!

"(a) Members of one body.—Rom. 12: 4, 5.

"(b) Branches of one vine.—John 15: 1-8.

"(c) Stones in one building.—1 Peter 2: 5; Eph. 2: 20.

"(d) Sheep in one sheepfold.—John 10: 1-4; 7-9."

In the after-meeting many questions were asked and answered, convincing the people more and more of the beauty and truth of the stranger's plea.

"Don't you think the church to-day represents an army?" asked Mrs. Sute. "Here is one part, the infantry; there another, the cavalry. All are fighting Satan."

"Ah! But are they fighting Satan shoulder to shoulder? In an army the infantry doesn't fight its own cavalry; neither does the artillery fire on its own infantry. The army is a unit; modern denominationalism is not."

"Doesn't the union exist in an invisible form?" asked Mr. Title.

"That would be impossible for two reasons: First, there is no union in division. Second, Jesus said (John 17: 20, 21) the world would see it and be influenced by it."

"How do you expect this union to be brought about?" asked another.

"By surrendering opinions, by having no name but the Christ's, by having no creed but the creed of primitive Christianity,—and let me say here, this was not the

so-called Apostolic Creed,—by having no rule of faith and practice but the Bible. You will admit that we can come to that position for Jesus' sake."

"But does the Bible give us everything we need? I think we ought to have something to show as a rule of faith."

"If you will show me a creed as good as the Bible, I will accept it. But to your question. The Scriptures are 'profitable for teaching, reproof, correction, instruction, that a man may be *furnished complete* unto all good works.'"

"Would your plea not destroy mission and church societies?" asked Professor Harwood.

"It might destroy mission societies, but it would not destroy missions. There are many missionaries in the world to-day who owe no allegiance to societies. Would it not be as easy for a church, or several churches, to select a missionary and support him, as to have a society do it? Of the other church societies I can but say, they are doing nothing that could not be done without them."

"We get our creed out of the Bible," interrupted a young man who had in various ways tried to show his opposition to the preaching.

"Then," was the quiet reply, "I would advise you to put it right back where you got it. Why should men write creeds and impose them upon other men? Why should they build narrow sects and bind others by their influences? The apostles did not thus; neither did the primitive church. We can not turn to the world of politics or lodges and say these are separate, because men

can not see alike, and they must be suited. The church that wears the name of Christ must keep itself unspotted from the world. Human systems can not be substituted for the divine. Anarchy must not take the place of Christ's authority. Aged theories dare not be upheld because they are hoary-headed. God's Word is the people's book, and we must abide by its teaching."

There is a marvelous power in the plea for a simple New Testament Christianity, and therefore such a meeting and subject could not but have its influence on Westville. There were some besides the members of the club who began to see "men as trees walking." Many were seeking a satisfactory solution of the divisions existing by searching if perchance they might find an unrevisable creed, one that would be broad enough to cover the world; simple enough to reach the humblest mind; strong enough to bind all believers in a holy unity, and profound enough to attract the most comprehensive intellect. That New Testament Christianity offers such a creed was plainly demonstrated by the stranger. Sectarianism as an unmitigated evil was set before the people and contrasted with the power and holiness of the gospel. The question now before the churches was, Would they accept or reject this simple plea? Alas! too many were blinded by prejudice or popularity or human frailties to take the necessary stand for God and right. Too many seemingly preferred what was merely inferential reasoning rather than that which is right. Yet here, as in every community, there were those who gladly heard and obeyed the command: 'Come forth, my people, out of her, that

ye have no fellowship with her sins, and that ye receive not of her plagues.' While the former were berating the stranger as a religious disturber, the latter were happy in the belief that a teacher had been found who would lead them out of the mists into the glorious light of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE FIRST CONVERT.

The next day, while several gentlemen were in John's office, the stranger entered. It was not long until the conversation centered on the sermon of the previous evening.

"Mr. Goodnow, what do you consider the main causes of division among professed Christians to-day?" asked John.

"I would place these as the real causes," was the reply: "1. Human opinions made a test of fellowship. 2. Human names for the followers of Christ. 3. Substitutes for God's commands. 4. Human creeds as a standard of doctrine.

"This, I believe, can be readily seen by noticing Paul's statement (1 Cor. 3:11): 'Other foundations can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus the Christ.' If all believers had more of the mind of Christ, they could and would lay aside these humanisms. I notice that the more carnal a Christian is, the more sectarian he will be. You will agree with me that it is a want of conformity to the divine will that has created all the rival sects, with all the attending bitterness, jealousies and follies."

"If I am not interrupting, I would like to ask you what your subjects will be to-night and to-morrow?"

"To-night I preach on 'The Will of God'; to-morrow on 'Man Must Do Something to Be Saved'; the

next evening on 'What Must a Man Do to Be Saved?' For some reason I forgot that last night."

This announcement naturally led the conversation into other channels, each one becoming more and more interested, until, to their surprise, one of them announced that it was ten minutes to noon. The gentlemen immediately dispersed to their several homes, carrying with them goodly thoughts, that were again discussed in the presence of their families.

The sermon that evening was a revelation to the church-goers of Westville. They heard things discussed that had never been mentioned in their pulpits before. So the next night, and the next. On this evening the preacher led them to the cross on Calvary, from there to the tomb; then giving a graphic description of the resurrection morn, he led them on to the great commission. He dwelt earnestly on these last words of the Savior as recorded by Matthew and Mark. Then he went to the memorable Pentecost, the wonderful scenes, the amazed Jews; that fiery sermon that touched the hearts of the multitude and led three thousand of them to Christ. With eloquent language he portrayed the agonizing cry of the convicted Jews: "Men, brethren, what shall we do?" And the answer of Peter as the Spirit gave him utterance: "Repent ye and be baptized, every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins: and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost" (Acts 2: 37, 38).

He then invited any one present who earnestly believed to yield to the gospel terms. Greatly to the surprise of the audience, Dr. Sherndon rose from his seat and advanced

to the preacher, where he made a public declaration of his faith in Christ and his willingness to obey him. After this confession the preacher turned to the audience and told them that they would imitate the Bible example and baptize the same hour of the night. They immediately went to the river, where, after a short prayer, the Doctor was buried beneath the yielding water, and rose again to the new life. This beautiful ordinance occasioned quite a stir among those on the bank. Very few had seen anything like it, yet it seemed to correspond perfectly with the practice of the apostles. As the preacher stepped out of the water, John, who had quietly left the crowd and stood by the water side, said: "Brother Goodnow, here is water. What hinders me to be baptized?" The question came with startling clearness, and the minister, stopped by the question and noticing the look of earnestness in the questioner's face, responded: "If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest." With a tremor in his voice John replied: "I believe that Jesus is the Christ." None in the audience had noticed John until he stopped the minister with his question. When his earnest "I believe" rang out on the moonlight air, a thrill ran through the crowd, and more than one eye was wet with tears, and his wife dropped to her knees, with thanks to God for her husband's conversion. In a few moments John was also baptized in the name of Jesus Christ, and the crowd dispersed to their homes.

This event occasioned much comment and opposition. Many began to search the Scriptures to see whether these things were so; others to prove the new doctrine false. The Pedobaptist ministers pooh-poohed the stranger and

his work until they found that some of their members were getting wonderfully interested; then they planned to prevent their attendance. The searchers were soon convinced that if this doctrine were false, the Bible could not be true. One thing was soon noticed and commented on, viz.: that the preacher could tell every honest inquirer his duty in the very language of the Scriptures. The fact that his first converts were men of prominence in Westville was of considerable aid in the new work. They were men who did not hastily change their opinions, and were noted as being of more than ordinary intelligence.

The editor of *The Gazette* was among the number who were led away by prejudice. Besides three articles by the ministers of the town, he wasted a column of his paper in an editorial opposing what he termed A WATERY SALVATION. The editorial began by berating the stranger and advising the people to remain away from his meetings. He referred them to the Adventist meeting and its outcome, slurred the work of the club, and denominating it as a society of cranks and would-be theologians, and closed by saying: "It seems very strange that respectable gentlemen should choose the dark hour of night to pretend to come to Christ. Heaven is certainly not an island, that we have to swim to it. We do not understand why our respectable citizens lend countenance to such proceedings. Neither do we understand what Mr. Goodnow's idea is in coming to our town. Is it his intention to sow strife and discord among the churches of our beautiful city? Does he think his actions will go unchallenged? Already three of our ministers have raised their voices in protest, and undoubtedly the others will be heard

from. We are not a theologian, but we wish to conclude this editorial with the following statement from Dr. F. W. Evans, of Des Moines:* 'No word signifying immersion is ever used in connection with any application of water under the law.'"

The letters were curiosities, in that they showed to what straits professed ministers of the gospel will go to uphold their church theories. The first was from the Holiness minister:

"To the Editor:

"Our community was disgraced last night by a performance at the river near the bridge. We do not understand why a mountebank should be allowed to enter our town and try to break the peace we enjoy. Everybody with horse sense knows that Jesus was never dipped in a mud hole. It surprised us that a prominent citizen could be so easily led away, and we will pray that the Holy Ghost will bring him back to his senses.

"H. O. SHOWTER."

"Dear Editor:

"My attention has been called to '*the doin's at the creek.*' I want to say that there is no Scripture warrant for such actions. Paul arose and was baptized. Any one ought to know from that that he stood up and was baptized right there in his own house. Peter says: 'We are elect through sanctification and *sprinkling* of the blood of Christ.' There is no dipping in that. I think all orthodox

* I need not state here that scholarship and the Bible give a lie to this statement.—M. D. B.

Christians ought to stay away from those meetings ; those people do not amount to anything, anyhow.

“ R. W. MORNER.”

“ *Dear Sir:*

“ I have been requested by several to express my opinions concerning the immersion the other night. Kindly let me say that I think it entirely uncalled for. Undoubtedly either of those gentlemen could have found a church home in one of our several churches, had they so desired.

“ JAMES P. QUENTON.”

As neither these letters nor the frowns of the self-righteous retarded the meetings, a new movement was inaugurated by the churches. *The Gazette* of the next week announced in large type:

“ *Grand Union Meetings*
of
All the Churches.

“ Rev. Eugene De Tere Howter, the celebrated evangelist from Chicago, will conduct revival meetings every night

AT THE OPERA HOUSE,
Beginning Sunday Morning.”

In addition to this advertisement, which was given a prominent place on the first page, notices were scattered among the news items. These consisted of recommendations, notices of other meetings, etc. Soon the two meetings, one for Christ and His church, the other for denominationalism and its manifold theories, were the talk of the

town. Every night persons stood up for prayer or went forward to the anxious-seat, and the fact was heralded by tongue and paper all through the neighborhood. Every week *The Gazette* devoted a column or more to the union meetings and their wonderful results. But what of the little meeting? The stranger seemed not to be surprised at the union meetings, nor at the neglect of the town paper. Quietly and prayerfully he labored day after day. Each evening found him proclaiming Christ and Him crucified. And again and again souls listened to his pleading and turned from the error of their ways. Many were persuaded concerning the Way, but feared the scorn, or loved the praise of men more than of God, and halted between two opinions. Committees had been organized to visit those who were getting interested in the little meeting. These were either persuaded to attend the union meetings or kept at home by visitors at the hour of meeting. No effort was left unused to prevent the success of the stranger's meeting. Angry parents forbade their children, upon pain of disinheritance, to become Christians. One man went so far as to threaten to shoot the preacher if he should baptize his wife. But threats and scoffs did not ruin the meeting. The ministers and "orthodox Christians" soon learned to leave the converts alone, for they were able to give such reasons for the course they had taken that none could gainsay. Moreover, it did not add to the dignity of a clergyman to be defeated in argument by a girl or boy of seventeen. When nothing else would avail, like those of old, they were filled with wrath and cried long and loud, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," or as it is expressed to-day, Orthodoxy is right;

it is aged ; it suited my grandmother, and it ought to suit you. Hurrah ! Hallelujah ! Ah !

The excitement of the meetings was not confined to the village, but spread through the country for several miles. The country community, like the town, divided itself into two camps, creating a bitterness that was not erased for several years. * The stranger made several attempts to prevent this folly by visiting the ministers and endeavoring to explain his work to them, but they refused to recognize him. Nothing was left, then, but to press on, unheeding the slurs and innuendoes, and work and pray for success.

At the end of the fourth week those in charge announced that two hundred cards of conversion had been signed ; while the stranger thanked God that sixty-seven souls had been brought to Christ. And in another week both meetings would close.

Many of the members of the club had attended the stranger's meetings, while others were in regular attendance at the union meetings. It was therefore decided that a meeting should be called and the stranger and the evangelist invited to address them. Those who had been baptized felt that they no longer needed the club, because they had something better. A few of the others wanted to be certain before they disbanded. As rapidly as possible the members were seen and arrangements made for a final meeting on Tuesday afternoon. Invitations were sent to the two ministers, acquainting them with the club's desires. The great evangelist promised to come, but on learning that the stranger would also address the meeting, decided that his converts needed a prayer meet-

ing that afternoon, and arranged accordingly. A hearty reply to their invitation came from the stranger, who promised to be with them and talk to them on "The Holy Spirit," and answer any questions that might be asked. This news was soon spread abroad, and the attendants at the union meeting were notified that Rev. Howter would preach on the same subject Monday evening. When the stranger heard this, he announced that he would have no meeting that night, but that they would all attend the other meeting and hear the sermon, thus giving the club an opportunity of hearing both sides of the question.

CHAPTER XV.

THE LAST MEETING.

The attendants at the union meeting were greatly surprised on Monday evening to behold the stranger and a great part of his congregation occupying prominent positions in the opera house. Quite a few of them had their Bibles, for which, however, they found little use. It was noticed that two or three visiting clergymen were escorted to the stage as soon as they were noticed in the audience, but no such honor was conferred upon the stranger. True, he was pointed out by one or two on the stage, but beyond this no further notice was taken of him. When the time for service arrived the great(?) evangelist announced as his text John 20:22: "He breathed on them, and said unto them, Receive ye the Holy Ghost;" and began his sermon. Like the old preacher, he took his text, and preached *from* it — very far from it, in fact. The sermon contained nothing new or startling; very little Bible was used, but the common theory of miraculous conversion, due to the immediate reception of the Holy Ghost, was presented. The main argument was that the sinner could do nothing until the Spirit had regenerated him, and the Spirit would only come by seeking and prayer. The anxious-seat was extolled as the place where many had received this blessing. The discourse was marred by a narrow and foolish

sectarianism, that gave vent to itself in bitter invectives hurled at the stranger and his converts. He pleaded for a return to the religion of the fathers and mothers of the present generation, claiming that millions had lived in the exercise of their faith and the enjoyment of its gracious assurance, and that millions had died in that faith whose consciences were never disturbed by questions of the mode of agency of the Holy Spirit. He bitterly denounced any one who would question the common mode of religious thought, and closed with an earnest invitation for sinners to come to the altar and receive the Spirit. As soon as the singing began, several went forward and prostrated themselves before the altar, while others began passing to and fro among the audience, inviting, cajoling, or threatening. The prayers were in keeping with the sermon and the songs, and such expressions as "Come just now, Lord!" "Give us a baptism of fire!" "A baptism from on high!" "Holy Ghost and fire!" "Pour out a Pentecostal shower!" were frequently used. At the conclusion of the evening's service it was announced that six had found peace and seventeen more were seeking.

The address to the club the next afternoon was of a totally different character. No appeal to prejudice was made; no harsh criticisms offered. The preacher discoursed in a simple manner the agency of the Holy Spirit, developing the idea that the Spirit was not sent to dwell in man to make him a Christian, but because he was one. The gift was not given to sinners to make them believe and obey; but to the saint because he had obeyed. Also, that the Spirit in conversion operates on persons always through the Word.

Briefly speaking, his arguments were as follows: One thing is finally settled, namely, that he is a person. (1) The pronoun *he* is used in John 16: 13; 14: 36. (2) Acts, such as belong to a personal agent, are attributed to him. See John 16: 13; 15: 2; 16: 8; Rom. 8: 26; Acts 3: 2. (3) He could be resisted. (Acts 7: 51; 1 Thess. 5: 19.)

His mission terminates with the churches of Christ. The world can not receive him. (John 6: 37, 39; 14: 17.) Aliens are not a fit habitation of the Spirit, neither are they the temple wherein he dwells. Being disobedient, they lie under condemnation, without hope and without God. The Spirit is given in answer to obedient love, therefore we read, "The Holy Spirit whom God hath given to them that obey him" (Acts 5: 32). There is a wide difference between the work of the Spirit upon men to make them believers and the gift of the Spirit to men who have believed and obeyed. There is no authentic instance where the former was done without the use of the word.

On the "Baptism of the Spirit," a subject upon which the union meeting dwelt much, the stranger gave the following explanation:

"The Savior speaks of it thus: 'For John indeed baptized in water; but ye shall be baptized in the Holy Spirit not many days hence' (Acts 1: 5, Am. Rev.). This was fulfilled on Pentecost, when *suddenly* there came from heaven a sound as of the rushing of a mighty wind, and it filled all the house where they were sitting. And there appeared unto them tongues parting asunder, like as of fire; and it sat upon each of them. And they were filled with the Holy Spirit, and began to speak with other

tongues, as the Spirit gave them utterance' (Acts 2: 24). Again: 'While Peter yet spake these words, the Holy Spirit fell on all those which heard the word. And they of the circumcision which believed were amazed, as many as came with Peter, because that on the Gentiles also was poured out the gift of the Holy Spirit. For they heard them speak with tongues, and magnify God' (Acts 10: 44-47). Please notice that in both cases the baptism was a sudden transaction. It was involuntary as to those who received it. In both instances the recipients 'spake with tongues,' or, if you please, in other languages."

After the discourse, in which other features of the subject were touched on, the stranger suggested that they have an informal discussion, or that he would, if desired, answer questions.

Dr. Sherndon was the first to respond with a question. "How does the Spirit convince the world of sin, righteousness and judgment?"

"By argument. On Pentecost he spake through the apostles. In Cornelius' house he spoke through Peter. To-day we use his word."

"How can we distinguish the Spirit from simple morality?" asked a member.

"The Spirit glorifies Christ. Simple morality tries to place the glory elsewhere. Morality does not lead to obedience. Its model is unknown, and its fruits are uncertain."

"How does the Spirit dwell in us if we can't feel it?" asked Mrs. Sute.

"By faith. 'That ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man; that Christ may

dwell in your hearts through faith' (Eph. 3:17). 'If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him' (John 14:23)."

"If faith comes by hearing and not by the Spirit's gift, why don't all have faith?" was Mr Title's query.

"Jesus said men are blinded by seeking worldly things. We have a manifestation of this in our town at the present time. For more of this read the parable of the soils (Matt. 4:1-20)."

"Did not God open Lydia's heart?" was the next one.

"Yes! But he did it by Paul's teaching, as you will learn from Acts 15:13, 14; Rom. 10:10, 17."

"Is the gospel the only method Jesus uses to draw us to him?"

"Jesus said: 'Every one that hath heard from the Father, and hath learned, cometh to me' (John 6:45). He also says they shall be taught of God. The gospel is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; no other way has ever been presented."

"I do not agree with the gentleman," said one of the members, who had been at the anxious-seat during the present revival. "We are told that the Lord opened Lydia's heart. The meaning of this is that divine power was brought to bear upon her, which led her to give heed to Paul's preaching. The Lord made a distinction between what he did and what Paul did. Paul spoke the word, but the Lord opened her heart. I am sure that divine power does not reside in words, and the gentleman must acknowledge that we are right and he is wrong."

"Jesus taught that divine power does reside in words.

'The words I speak unto you, they are spirit and they are life.' 'The word of God is the seed of the kingdom.' 'Life is in the seed.' Peter was to tell 'words whereby he [Cornelius] and his household were to be saved.' 'For this they willingly are ignorant of, that by the word of God the heavens were of old, and the earth standing out of the water and in the water.'

"But why multiply references to the Scriptures? Surely these will convince any one whether I am right or not. Again, if our friend will read Acts 16, he will learn that 'by the foolishness of preaching,' and not by his theory of the Holy Spirit, Lydia was saved."

"If the Spirit don't speak peace to our souls," shouted another, springing to his feet and gesticulating wildly, "how can we tell when we are pardoned? I know I am pardoned and wonderfully converted. Hallelujah! I have my witness here," he continued, striking his breast, "and no one can deny it."

"Jesus said: 'If I bear witness of myself, my witness is not true' (John 5:31). Are you any better than he?" replied the preacher, quietly. "Now, do not get excited. Your evidence is very weak. If you sift this mourners' bench theory, you will find that it is a theory, and nothing more. The effect is a psychological one that is well known; excitement of any kind may bring it on. It is nothing more or less than a type of hypnotism, or mind influence. The seeker is thrown into a certain state of mind; he knows this, but does not know what produces it, and therefore imagines, because some one says so, that it is produced by the Spirit. We need some more tangible evidence than this. I also know that I am par-

done. Paul says: 'Whereas ye were servants of sin, ye became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching whereunto ye were delivered; and being made free from sin, ye became servants of righteousness.' I want no better evidence than this to tell me that the Spirit beareth witness with our spirit, that we are children of God."

"Mr. Preacher, wasn't Paul's sins forgiven like mine? I think you will find a mourner there," asked another member.

"Paul's sins were forgiven when he had obeyed the form of teaching — the gospel — not before. You can not find precedent for the mourners' bench in this instance. When Ananias came to Paul and found him praying, he told him his message. 'The God of our fathers hath appointed thee to know his will and to see the Righteous One, and to hear a voice from his mouth. *For thou shalt be a WITNESS FOR HIM unto all men of what thou hast seen and heard.* And now why tarriest thou? arise, and be baptized, and wash away thy sins, calling on his name.'

"Let me repeat what I said the other night. Faith, repentance and baptism are prerequisites to forgiveness of sin under the gospel dispensation. God has revealed no other way."

"I believe if the heart is only right, that is all that is necessary," interrupted another.

"Are you sure the heart is right, when you will not hear and obey the simple commands of your Savior?" was the reply. "Jesus says: 'If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love' (John 15:10).

"One thing more and then I will close. If feelings are an evidence of pardon, what use have we of the

Bible? If we can not appeal to God's Word, how can we know anything about pardon? Either your theory or the Bible must fall, for they contradict each other, and truths do not contradict anything but falsehood."

After a few minutes of desultory conversation on the subject, Dr. Sherndon arose and requested the members to listen to a few remarks on what he considered the duty of the club.

"You know," he began, "that we have examined many questions during our meetings. The ministers of our town churches have presented their views before us, and we have found them lacking in various ways. This gentleman asks us to be Christians—nothing more, nothing less; he has upheld his every view. He has presented a Biblical command for his teaching and practice. What more can we ask? I believe he has brought to us that which we were seeking, namely, an apostolic church. Sectarian names and churches no longer attract me. I want nothing but the gospel of Christ. I will go nowhere but to Him. I will be a member of nothing but the one body. Am I right? I know I am.

"If you and I had been lost on the ocean, and had drifted to some uninhabitable island and there read the Bible, what would we have done? Supposing we had obeyed its commands and had become followers of the Lord, what church would we have belonged to? What name would we have worn? Why not, then, in this civilized country, stand for Christ and his church, wearing no name but the divine one, recognizing no authority but Christ's. I do not know what you will do, but as for me and my house, we will serve God, and him only."

The discussion that followed the Doctor's remarks was long and earnest. Many were in favor of following the good example set before them; others were not quite ready for such a move, and thought it wise to wait a while. Others, again, were bitterly opposed to leaving their respective churches. A few denounced the stranger for coming to Westville and causing the disturbance. When it was found that no conclusion would be reached, John Suete proposed that each one would state his preference on a slip of paper; if a majority decided to disband, or enter some church, the others would agree. Four members were appointed to distribute and then collect the papers. Each paper was carefully examined, and the presiding officer announced that ninety-one preferred the church of Christ, forty-three refused to leave their respective churches, and seven had no choice. After a short speech, the presiding officer asked Dr. Sherndon to close the work of the club with prayer.

Dr. Sherndon's prayer was touching, and breathed out the Spirit of his Master:

"Our Father, God! Thou hast led us in pleasant paths of inquiry and research. Thou hast filled our minds with the wisdom that makes us wise unto salvation. Aid us, we pray Thee, in Thy mercy to continue faithful to the lessons we have learned. The grandeur of unity has been brought to our notice. Oh, Lord, help us to walk as one forever! We are one family, adopted children. Oh, be with us, that we may not depart from the plain path! Forgive us wherein we have done wrong and strengthen us for better service. We thank Thee for Thy mercy; for Thy love; for Thy truth. We earnestly

thank Thee that our brother has been permitted to bring unto us the bread of life. And now we pray Thee that we may all be drawn closer together in the bonds of love; and to Thee we will give praise and honor forever in Jesus' name. Amen."

At the close of the prayer the members quietly dispersed, and the history of the Truth Seekers' Club came to an end.

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CHAPTER XVI.

FINIS.

That evening the stranger announced that his meeting would close the next Lord's day, and earnestly invited any who desired to become Christians to present themselves before that time. Night after night the members of the club confessed their Lord and were buried with him in baptism. Others followed the good example until one hundred and thirty-seven were numbered with the saved. On Sunday the stranger introduced a Brother Vinton, who would preach to them in the evening, and who, he earnestly hoped, would labor with them and for them as their evangelist during the ensuing year. Of that last meeting we will say nothing; friends must part in this world, and the farewells are soon said. The stranger departed the next morning to his new field of labor, carrying with him the blessings of the little congregation.

The union meetings continued two more weeks, and announced that two hundred and forty-four had found peace with God. These were given the privilege of joining any church they chose. After several days of hard labor among these converts, the pastors bitterly bewailed the fact that only ninety-seven had united with the churches.

Let us look back over the two years intervening between now and the great meetings. Our story will be the story of any town. Brother Vinton had labored faithfully and well; many souls had been added to Christ. More than two hundred faithful members represented the cause of Christ. The church was doing its duty, and Westville was better for its existence. Much of the bitterness — at least the open bitterness that was displayed when the stranger was there — had disappeared. Another and greater danger confronted the church, namely, the silly theory that one church is as good as another. To this was added the attempt of the churches to have the new congregation depart from its doctrine and practice by adding things unwritten. The doctrine of popularity was insidiously preached to the younger members. They were informed by friends(?) that they were being neglected by the church and ought to have X. Y. Z. and other societies to keep them at work. Could we have entered the circle of Christians standing firm and steadfast and watched their daily walk and conversation, we could have learned the power of God's truth and way. Every Lord's day found the members gathered in the chapel to worship God. In this worship they made no attempt by operatic singing to please the people. In singleness of heart they gathered to worship God.

After the opening hymn had been sung, some one chosen before the day presided at the meeting. The officers were not drivers or bosses, but examples to the flock. In the choice of these men the church had carefully and prayerfully endeavored to provide itself with leaders who could teach, and who were of good repute in

the neighborhood. On this Lord's day we find our old friends, now elders in the congregation, John Suete and Dr. Sherndon, presiding. The prayers were heartfelt, the singing was done with the spirit and with understanding, and the exhortations were strong and earnestly given. It could be truly said of this congregation that each one had a hymn, a prayer, an exhortation, an admonition. One thing was especially noticeable: there was always enough money in the treasury for missionary work, caring for the poor, and other necessary things. Their minister was an evangelist who labored under the advice of the church and was supported by them. Every one contributed of his means on the Lord's day, and the Lord's treasury was not built up by suppers and other silly devices. Their poor and their widows had an abundance, and their good deeds were known and read of all men. In their missionary work they followed the early churches. Under the fostering care of the Westville church, four other congregations had been organized in the country, and these five churches, besides their work at home and in the neighboring communities, were helping a laborer in far-off Japan.

But why continue our story farther? It would only be the history of many congregations who are contending for the faith once for all delivered unto the saints. Each year found new souls added; each year found some departed to their eternal home. Some had fallen by the wayside; others, fascinated by the glitter of denominationalism, had departed from the faith, thinking more of the praise of man than of God. Thus we leave them. The little beginning in John Suete's office had grown to

a mighty work for God. Many who first came to the Truth Seekers' Club with but a faint knowledge of God's Word were towers of strength in the cause of Christ. So may it be with you, dear reader. He who carefully and prayerfully studies God's Word can not be led astray.

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